PANASONIC DMC-FZ38 SUPERZOOM CAMERA



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The second of th

Control noise

- Get rid of noise in your images
- Make the most of in-camera settings
- In-depth what causes noise

EXPERT ADVICE

Reader Masterclass with... Clive Nichols









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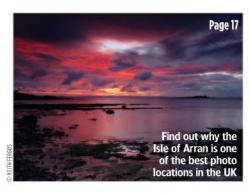
Nikon's unique 2.7" LCD Vari-angle monitor makes it easy to take pictures from any angle. 12.3

megapixels and EXPEED image processing system for high definition images. Live View with four AF modes. Enhanced creativity with HD movie function for



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AP test reports Telephone: 01707 273 773 www.testreports.co.uk/photography/ap

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noise is crucial

How you use



Life is filled with distractions: things that keep you from what you want to do, and what you feel you should be doing. People

chat when you want to think, the TV is on when you are trying to do your tax return, and there are so many pressing chores in the house that you can't find the time to take a picture. These distractions, these things that break your concentration and detract you from your intended path, are noise. In life I'm quite susceptible to noise, and I'm easily distracted, but in my photography I won't tolerate it. When I go out to take pictures I go out on my own, so no one can cloud my judgement with theirs. And when I'm working on my pictures I sometimes can't even have the radio on in the background because my brain's processor can't simultaneously listen to a presenter and concentrate on what I am doing on screen.

In my pictures I generally try to eliminate noise, to show the detail of the subject, but noise can be used creatively to add atmosphere - just like background music in a shop. An understanding of noise is crucial, as it. and the way it is removed, can destroy an image. Being in control is the key. See Barney Britton's features on noise on pages 63-65 and 71-73.

Our question nf the week

In AP 8 August we asked...

How do you shoot your macro?

You answered...

A Macro lens only 58%

B Bellows 7%

C Extension tubes 17%

B Never shoot macro 18%

This week we ask...

Are your camera's images noisier than you would like?

A Yes

COVER PICTURES © CLIVE NICHOLS AND KET

B No

C Don't know

Vote online

www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

Send us your pictures

To have your pictures published in Gallery, send in a selection of up to ten images. They can be either a selection of different images or all have the same theme. Digital files sent on CD should be saved in a Photoshop-compatible format, such as JPEG or TIFF, with a contact sheet and submission form. Visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/apgallery for details. We cannot publish images without the necessary technical details. Each RGB image should be a minimum of 2480 pixels along its longest length. Transparencies and prints are also accepted. We recommend that transparencies are sent without glass mounts and posted via Special Delivery. For transparencies, prints or discs to be returned you must include an SAE with sufficient postage.





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News | Analysis | Comment | PhotoDiary 22/8/09

Samsung has unveiled what it bills as the world's first cameras to feature two screens – one on the front, the other on the back

Mine's a double, page 6



Rare images uncovered for UK exhibition | Early Fox Talbot among treasures

Historic photos revealed for major show

ISTORIC photographs from the dawn of photography will be revealed in the first-ever major photographic exhibition to take place at the British Library in London.

The exhibition, entitled Points of View: Capturing the 19th Century in Photographs, will draw on the British Library's collection of more than 300,000 images.

Opening on 30 October, it will feature 250 'rarely seen' prints, including a 'calotype negative' created by British photography inventor William Henry Fox Talbot, dating from 1842–43 (see above right).

The Library acquired the Fox Talbot archive from the National Trust in 2006.

'Camera phones are now ubiquitous, but in its infancy, photography was an expensive, elaborate and experimental pursuit,' said a British Library spokesman.

John Falconer, the Library's head of Visual Materials, added: 'Points of View explores the development



of photography in the 19th century and how it quickly became a common part of daily life and a major commercial industry.

'Today we can't imagine life without photos, but its invention opened up a new world of visual communication and personal expression.'

The show will examine the development of photography, from its invention in 1839 up

to the growth of a 'popular amateur market' in the early 20th century.

The British Library collection includes images from Kodak's British archive that stretches back more than 120 years, described as a photographic treasure.

Photos on show will include a portrait of Wilfrid Scawen by Lady Alice Mary Kerr (right), captured around 1870



SNAP SHOT

Stop press

An optical scientist has converted a Canon EOS 30D to uncover what he claims is fresh evidence that a 16th century artist used 'optical projections' to help him paint. Charles Falco, professor of Optical Sciences at the University of Arizona, modified the DSLR to enable it to capture infrared images, revealing 'underdrawings' in a 1543 painting by Italian artist Lorenzo Lotto. For details see next week's issue.

Veteran dies

Bob Lowrey, a photographer who worked at the Western Daily Press newspaper for more than 40 years, has died aged 73. Bob joined the newspaper in 1958 after completing his national service. He retired in 1999, but continued to work on a freelance basis.

Fund-raising portraits

An exhibition of portraits served as a fund-raising tribute to a photographer who committed suicide earlier this year after suffering mental health problems. Portrait photographer Matthew R Lewis, 49, took his own life in May. His celebrity subjects included Stephen Fry, Boy George and Björk. The exhibition took place at The Movie Poster Art Gallery in London, organised by Andrew Shanahan, the photographer's partner of 20 years. Proceeds will be donated to the mental health charity Mind and the bipolar organisation MDF.

Meet AP at Thames Festival

DON'T miss next month's Mayor's Thames Festival, where Amateur Photographer and What Digital Camera have teamed up with Olympus to offer tips on taking photographs of London and the river.

The 'drop-in' masterclasses will take place in an AP and WDC marquee on Bankside as part of the South Bank festivities on Saturday 12 and Sunday 13 September.

Photographers and editorial staff will be available from noon until 6pm on each day.

Olympus will loan out cameras for readers to try (deposit required), and a Pen E-P1 camera and a place on AP's School of Photographic Imaging photography course are among the prizes in the Mayor's Thames Festival photography competition.

The festival is promoted as a free outdoor event,



featuring street theatre, music, dance and exhibitions, as well as art installations. A display of fireworks on the river takes place on the evening of 13 September.

For full competition details visit www.thamesfestival.org.

News

PhotoDiary

A week of photographic opportunity

WEDNESDAY

19 AUGUST

EXHIBITION 147th Edinburgh International Exhibition of Photography, until 6 September at The Photographic Exhibition Centre, 68 King

Street, Edinburgh EH3 6QU. Entry £2. Visit www.edinburghpestivals.co.uk or www.edinburghphotographicsociety.co.uk. **DON'T MISS** Vintage and classic car meet, at The Fleece Inn, Bretforton, Worcestershire WR11 7JE. Tel: 01386 831 173. www.nationaltrust.org.uk.



THURSDAY

20 AUGUST

DON'T MISS The Ashes: Final Test, celebrations or otherwise around the Brit Oval cricket ground in Kennington, London SE11 SSS. Visit www. britoval.com. **EXHIBITION** Foto8 Summer Show, until 5 September at Foto8 Ltd. London ECIY OTH. Tel: 0207 253 8801. Visit www.foto8.com.

FRIDAY

21 AUGUST

DON'T MISS Shoreditch Festival 2009, includes art and performances, until 22 August at Shoreditch Park in east London. Visit www. shoreditchfestival.org.uk. **EXHIBITION** Norfolk and Suffolk landscapes by Roger Dewsbery, until 29 August at The Upstairs Gallery, Suffolk NR34 9HH. Tel: 01502 717 191.

Saturday

22 AUGUST

EXHIBITION Present, Past, Future by Richard Heeps, until 20 September at The Photographers Lounge, Dorset. Tel: 01929 424 414. Visit www. photographerslounge.co.uk. **DON'T MISS** Let's Go On a Journey Trail (10.30am-5.30pm) at Anglesey Abbey, Cambridge CB25 9EJ. Tel: 01223 810 080. Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk.



SUNDAY

23 AUGUST

DON'T MISS Run Wild! Hunt for 'bats, buzzards, deer and hares' at Avebury, Wiltshire SN8 IRF. Tel: 01672 539 250. Visit www.nationaltrust. org.uk. **EXHIBITION** Colin Conway: Dunes and Nudes and other Female Figure Studies, until 28 August at The Camera Club, London SE11 4DS. Tel: 0207 587 1809. Visit www.thecameraclub.co.uk.

MONDAY

24 AUGUST

EXHIBITION Royal Photographic Society's International Print Exhibition, until 30 August at Wingfield Barns, Suffolk IP21 SRA. Tel: 01379 384 505. EXHIBITION World Press Photo Exhibition, until 5 September at Holyrood, Edinburgh EH99 ISP. Tel: 0131 348 5200.

TUESDAY

25 AUGUST

EXHIBITION Pastoral Visions by Graham Ovenden, until 18 October at Dimbola Lodge, Isle of Wight PO40 9QE. Tel: 01983 756 814. Visit www.climbola.co.uk. EXHIBITION Polaroids: Mapplethorpe, until 13 September at Modern Art Oxford, 0X1 1BP. Tel: 01865 722 733. Visit www.modemartoxford.org.uk.

Samsung reveals 'dual display' cameras



as a 'premium' compact camera brand.

'We need to bring out something over and above other manufacturers,' said James Loader, Samsung UK's Digital Imaging Division camera product manager.

The Bluetooth function is designed to allow the user to transfer images

to mobile phones or to another camera.

The ST1000 houses a 3.5in touch screen. Its 5x Schneider Kreuznach lens aims to deliver the 35mm viewing angle equivalent of a 35–175mm zoom.

The ST1000 conforms with the Digital Living Network Alliance that various manufacturers have set up as a standard Wi-Fi system for products (such as digital picture frames) 'to talk to each other wirelessly'.

The camera's Wi-Fi also allows photos to be uploaded to social networking websites without the need to connect to a computer.

Options include shutter priority, aperture priority and manual exposure. The top equivalent ISO is 4800 (at a maximum 3MP resolution).

Samsung has equipped each of its new cameras with Micro SD storage cards. They support versions up to 4GB capacity. The cameras are due out at the end of August.

Also unveiled were the 12MP PL55 (£149), 12MP ES60 (£129), 10MP ES20 (£89) and 12MP ES17 (£89).



AMSUNG has unveiled what it bills as the world's first cameras to feature two screens – one on the front and the other on the back.

The 12.2-million-pixel ST550 (\$299) and ST500 (\$249) each sport a 4.6x optical zoom, with a 35mm viewing angle equivalent to a 27mm lens at the wide end.

The front LCD monitor measures 1.5in and is ideal for self-portraits, according to Samsung. It also features a built-in animation option to help keep a child 'engaged' when taking their picture.

A smiley face, activated by pressing the shutter button halfway, will appear to warn the subject that the picture is about to be taken.

A visible 'countdown' on the front screen allows the person being photographed time to pose when the self-timer is set.

On the back, the ST550 (pictured above) and ST500 feature a 3.5in and 3in LCD screen respectively. The touch screens feature Gesture UI (User Interface), allowing the photographer to delete an image, for example, by merely tracing an 'X' on the screen using their finger.

The pair also include a 1280x720-pixel 'HD' movie mode and dual image stabilisation.

Also new is the single-screen ST1000 (pictured right), a £349 model that boasts Wi-Fi and Bluetooth wireless connectivity.

The 12.2MP model also includes a GPS location tagging function.

Samsung said it is launching the ST1000 in a bid to encourage consumers to buy 'higherend' products, hoping they will view Samsung



AP man makes AOP shortlist

AN image captured by AP technical writer Barney Britton was among the shortlisted entries at this year's AOP Open photography awards (see left).

Photojournalist Richard Wainwright won Best in Show with a documentary shot of two boys 'surviving street life in Mongolia'. It beat 1,500 other entries to claim the title. Meanwhile, the Public Choice Award went to Lara Jade whose image entitled 'Bernadette' received nearly one in seven votes in an online poll.

The best images are on show until 28 August at the Association of Photographers (AOP) gallery, the address of which is 81 Leonard Street, London EC2A 4QS.





SNAP SHOT

Price crash

Getty Images has launched a service that provides its clients with low-priced photos in small file sizes in response to growing demand for digital pictures for use online. The Web & Mobile photos will be priced according to pixel size and type of licence, starting from '\$5'. 'The photography industry is more competitive than ever,' said Getty Images contributor Shannon Fagan. 'These new products provide an opportunity for photographers to benefit from the exponential growth of the online market without changing our own business model.'

Decisive moment

Sky News urged its viewers to send in a 'snapshot' of their lives when the date and time aligned with the ascending numbers 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. People sent the UK-based TV station images from around Europe on a variety of subjects, all taken on 7 August 2009, at 11 minutes past 10 and 12 seconds (the time read: 07/08/09 at 10:11:12).

Ricoh firmware

Ricoh has released a firmware update for its GR Digital II compact camera. Firmware version 2.40 includes correction of a problem concerning long exposures when the 'orientation information (horizontal or vertical) of the image may not be recorded correctly', says Ricoh. For full details visit www.ricoh.com/r_dc/download/firmware/grd2/.

Fees protest

Press photographers are set to protest outside the London offices of *The Guardian* over the newspaper's withdrawal of fees for pictures that it subsequently re-uses. The National Union of Journalists (NUJ) has backed the action, planned for 1 September, the day the new rules take effect.

EISA names best camera kit

ANON'S EOS 500D has won European SLR Camera of the Year in the annual contest run by the European Imaging and Sound Association (EISA), the membership of which includes AP.

The EOS 500D was described by judges as an 'excellent DSLR for both novices and advanced amateurs'

The citation added: 'The quality of the HD video is so impressive that it might provoke the beginning of a new movie-making

hobby for some users.'

Olympus's E-P1 was named Camera of the Year, judges applauding the appeal of its elegant retro design.

Nikon's D3x won the title European Professional Camera and Canon's EOS 5D Mark II triumphed in the Advanced Camera category.

The European Lens award went to the 'lightweight and affordable' Sigma 24-70mm f/2.8 IF EX DG HSM.

EISA's best lens for travel was the Tamron 18-270mm f/3.5-6.3 Di II VC LD Macro. The top zoom lens accolade was handed to Sony's 70–400mm f/4–5.6 G SSM.

Photo Innovation of the Year honours went to Fujifilm's Super CCD EXR imaging sensor.

Multimedia Camera of 2009-2010 was Panasonic's Lumix DMC-GH1. 'It combines the advantages of a compact camera with those of a DSLR: it is lightweight, has a small body, a high-resolution electronic viewfinder and Live View.'

The Sony Cyber-shot DSC-WX1 (see below) was voted Compact Camera of the Year.



Other winners included the Olympus mju Tough–8000 (Adventure Compact winner); Casio's Exilim EX–H10 (Travel Compact); and the Samsung WB1000 (Advanced Compact).

Canon's Pixma Pro9000 Mark II triumphed in the Photo Printer section.

 For more on this year's awards turn to page 47



Sony cameras boast Exmor R sensor

SONY'S Cyber-shot TX1 and WX1 digital compact cameras boast a new imaging sensor and a continuous shooting rate claimed to rival many professional DSLRs.

Due out in September, both 10.2-million-pixel newcomers feature a 'mechanical shutter' designed to capture images at up to 'ten frames per second'.

The pair house an Exmor R CMOS sensor – previously used only in Sony camcorders. The sensor is 'back-illuminated' and claimed to be able to gather more light because it is designed so that its 'wiring' is underneath the light-receiving surface.

'Conventional image sensor architecture has required wires and other circuit elements to be positioned above the light-sensitive photodiodes, limiting the

imager's light-gathering capability,' said the firm.

The TX1 and WX1 also boast Sweep Panorama, a mode introduced in Sony's Cyber-shot DSC-HX1.

The WX1 sports a 5x Sony G lens that produces the 35mm viewing angle equivalent of a '24mm' lens at the wide end. The TX1 features a 4x Carl Zeiss Vario Tessar optic. A 3in screen is featured on the TX1, while the WX1 has a 2.7in monitor.

Both cameras will be compatible with Sony's new 'Party-shot' (IPT-DS1), an optional £130 accessory, designed to ensure the photographer is not left out of group photos. 'It pans and tilts the camera while adjusting zoom settings and automatically composing images. Face detection and smile shutter recognise and track faces...' adds Sony.

Arrested amateur may sue police



Committed to defending your photographic rights!

A PHOTOGRAPHER who complained to police after being stopped while taking pictures in Kent amid terrorism fears may sue the force for false arrest, AP has learned.

Alex Turner, who was arrested on Chatham High Street last month and released shortly afterward, is 'considering his options', according to his solicitor.

Police are conducting an internal enquiry following the complaint, which, the force has told Turner, is likely to take several months.

Turner said he was initially stopped by two men who claimed to work for 'Medway Council' (see AP 25 July 2009).

They called on a nearby Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) and were later joined by another officer.

The photographer said he declined to provide the 'council workers' with details of his identity when requested because they did not identify themselves as police officers.

Speaking to AP, the photographer's lawyer, David Harris, said Turner may pursue civil action for 'false arrest'.

He may also sue the

local council for lodging a 'false complaint' about his behaviour.

The photographer made an official complaint to Kent Police and said the incident left him 'traumatised'.

However, Chief
Superintendent Steve
Corbishley, area commander
for Medway, said that there
was a need to establish
the identity of the man in
question, whose behaviour
had 'caused concern' and
who, when asked, had
'refused to provide his details'.

In a statement, he said officers were 'placed in a situation where I truly believe the vast majority of the public would expect them to find out what the circumstances were, not least when Mr Turner's behaviour had generated suspicion with local council employees and he had refused to reveal his identity'.

He said officers have a responsibility to use their powers to identify who they are talking to.'

Turner hit back, insisting he was not obliged to provide personal details to the council workers. 'I was taking pictures at about 11.30am in the high street, in full view of anyone who cared to notice. Pictures I took of people I asked their permission... Pictures of buildings were taken openly with no effort made on my part to conceal what I was doing.'

Exhibition marks paparazzi milestone

ARE vintage prints of images captured by the photographer hailed as the 'original paparazzo' are to go on show in London.

Tazio Secchiaroli (1925-1998) was credited as the basis for the character Paparazzo, who appeared in Federico Fellini's 1960 film La Dolce Vita.

The exhibition will also focus on Brigitte Bardot and include pictures of the Hollywood star taken by other



Secchiaroli shot this 1963 image of Brigitte Bardot on a film set

paparazzi of the 1960s.

A spokesman for the show said: 'Fuelled by an international obsession with celebrity, these rare photographs trace the creation of a more candid, intimate and revealing depiction of youth that swiftly replaced the more controlled and posed studio imagery of the publicity machines of film studios.

'It shows how Bardot and the paparazzi created a whole new image of womanhood, female sexuality and youth fashion.'

The show runs from 3 September-3 October at the James Hyman Gallery, 5 Savile Row, London W1S 3PD. Tel: 0207 494 3857.

ClubNews

AP's weekly round-up of club news from all over Britain

Stranraer Camera Club The south-west Scotland-based club will start its new season of meetings on 7 September and says new members are welcome. The 2009/2010 season promises a mixture of competitions, talks and workshops. Meetings take place at St Andrew's Church Hall in Stranraer. For details visit www.stranraercameradub.com.

North Cheshire Photographic Society

Poynton Civic Hall is the venue for the society's first meeting of the new season on 8 September, kicking off with a showcase of members' travel pictures. For details visit www.ncps.org.uk.

Lytham St Annes Photographic Society

The 61st annual exhibition of photography. called Photoshow 2009, will take place on 22 August at the Drive Methodist Halls, East Bank Road, St Annes FY8 1ND. The show is open Mon-Fri 10am-9pm, and Sat 10am-5.30pm. Entry is free.

Send club news to: apevents@ipcmedia.com

New Coolpix

This autumn will see the launch of the 12MP Coolpix S640, claimed to have the fastest startup time (0.7secs) of any camera in its class. It will cost £249.99, but the launch date is yet to be confirmed. Nikon will also debut the 'slim and elegant' 12MP Coolpix S570, due out in September priced £199.99.

Fuji newcomers

Fujifilm has unveiled three new compact cameras, including the 10MP FinePix Z35, due out next month. Also new is the 12MP J30, billed as a 'pocket-sized dynamo', which is available in shops this month, and the 10.2MP A170, which is also due in August.

Robson first

Former England football manager Sir Bobby Robson, who died earlier this month aged 76, was reportedly the first player to strike an image rights deal. Robson was said to have been paid 'three guineas' for his photograph to appear on cigarette cards when he was a player in the 1950s and 1960s. Robson, who managed Newcastle and Ipswich, died after a long battle with cancer.

Pentax reveals new waterproof camera

PENTAX has unveiled three new digital compact cameras, including a ten-million-pixel 'waterproof' model called the Optio WS80.

Due out in the next few weeks, the WS80 (pictured) is a £209.99 camera aimed at 'families on days out', according to Stephen Sanderson, product coordinator at Pentax UK's Imaging Systems Division.

The WS80 sports a 5x optical zoom (35-175mm equivalent), a 2.7in monitor and is claimed to be waterproof down to 1.5m. It is also designed to be dustproof.

The camera features Pentax's Pixel Track Shake Reduction, which, according to Sanderson, aims to reduce blur without the camera having to increase the ISO setting.

Also unveiled are the 12.1MP Optio P80, priced £179.99, and the 10MP E80, priced £99.99.



Nikon predicts large loss

NIKON expects to make a net loss of 28 billion ven (around £173m) for the year ending 31 March 2010 as it continues to face tough trading conditions.

However, the firm posted an operating profit of 730 million yen for the three months ending 30 June 2009.

In a statement, Nikon said that its Imaging Products Business has been 'heavily affected by the strong yen

and weak market conditions'.

Sales for the three months ending 30 June fell 26.4% on the same period the year before.

Though it says its Imaging Products Business 'bottomed out' in the previous financial year, Nikon predicts lower sales revenue this year owing to 'sluggish personal consumption' and its 'transition to models at more affordable price levels'.

This week in...



Restrictions on the importation of goods from overseas led dealers to stress that well-known camera brands such as Leica and Contax were freely available to 'priority users' without the need to apply for a 'board of trade licence'. Adverts placed in AP's issue dated 26 August 1959 listed doctors, dentists, 'newspapers' and architects among those to which the new concession applied. The buyer first needed to 'genuinely establish that they need a camera for work of importance to the community at large,' stated a Wallace Heaton advert on page one (below).

The dealer would then order the goods and 'delivery will in the main be subject only to factory delay, if any', added Dollands of Bond Street on page 6.





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www.cliftoncameras.co.uk

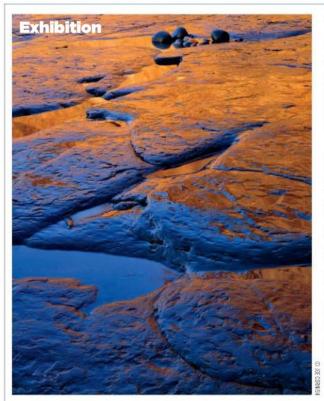
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Your guide to the latest photography books, exhibitions and websites





Water & Stone: **Essence of Yorkshire** Joe Cornish

Until 8 January 2010. Lockwoods restaurant, 83 North Street, Ripon, North Yorkshire HG4 1DP. Open Tues, Wed and Fri 10am-11pm; Thurs and Sat 9am-11pm. Tel: 01765 607 555. Website: www.lockwoodsrestaurant.co.uk. Admission free

In the world of landscape photography, Joe Cornish is a household name. His wild landscapes and idyllic seascapes have for some years been the benchmark to which many landscape photographers aspire. For his latest exhibition Joe has joined forces with Lockwoods restaurant in his home county of Yorkshire to exhibit a number of landscape images. The restaurant prides itself on using locally sourced ingredients, and environmental sustainability is also a key focus for Joe. At the heart of his photographic vision lies the idea of reconnecting with nature, so it is apt that his large-format images should provide the backdrop for an ethical dining experience. A selection of images depicting tranquil sunsets, dramatic rock formations and intensely coloured skies - the backbone of Joe's work - will be on display for diners to enjoy while they munch on locally produced cuisine. Gemma Padley

Book review Available Light: Photographic Techniques for Using Existing Light Sources

By Don Marr Amherst Media, paperback, 128 pages, £25.99, ISBN 978-1-58428-255-6

If you've read Andy Rouse's book Living Landscapes (see opposite page) and are inspired to go out and take your own wildlife pictures - or any pictures for that matter Don Marr's latest guide should in theory be the ideal companion. Marr covers the foundations of lighting, direction and contrast, providing simple techniques for exposing and getting the best tonal range. My main criticism of this book, though, is its focus on the portrait. The title doesn't suggest this is restricted to portraiture, yet every example photograph, apart from a couple of images, is a portrait. Perhaps Don is gearing up for a series of Available Light guides, but it seems he could have included plenty of tips for fans of Andy Rouse, Charlie Waite and others.

That said, while it may be narrow in focus and a little basic in some respects, the real lesson here is that sometimes freeing yourself from your equipment and using only the natural elements can make you more relaxed and spontaneous. This, in turn, can lead to better pictures. It's an important thing to remember. Jeff Meyer

Website

http://britishphotohistory.ning.com/

It's good to talk about photography because there is, after all, much to be discussed. Yet aside from musings on the latest camera gear or digital innovations, occasionally it is fun to dip into the past to find out a bit more about images and photographic practices from years gone by. British Photographic History provides a platform for photography enthusiasts of all skill levels to share their thoughts on all things related to photography and history. On the site, which was launched at the beginning of the year, there is a forum for those who enjoy lively debate. A quick scroll down the active threads shows members sharing advice on a range of issues relating to antique photographs and photographic practices. The events page is particularly useful as a source for news of current exhibitions, talks and workshops with a focus on antique photography. Events such as the London Photograph Fair, which takes place on 6 September, and a conference at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London on 3 October discussing all aspects of photography - past and future - are two sample listings. The site is still in its infancy, but it is a valuable photographic resource nonetheless. Gemma Padley



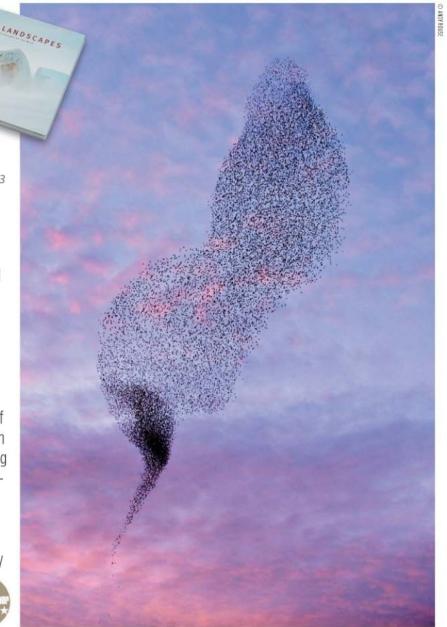
Book review

Living Landscapes: Creative Visions of the Wild

Argentum, hardback, 160 pages, £25, ISBN 978-1-902538-56-3

Andy Rouse is known as one of the most creative wildlife photographers currently working, and in his latest offering he emboldens this notion. 'Living Landscapes' is a brilliant collection of themed portfolios ranging from the traditional shots of penguins braving the waters and skulking polar bears to more abstract pictures of starling formations (see right) and geese in flight (below).

It's Andy's creative use of long exposures, low perspectives and wide focal lengths that give us the animal's sense of place within its habitat, and this really draws you in. In fact, it's mesmerising – and at the end of the book, Andy even provides extended captions for each image explaining how he made it. His image of a sleeping lion, for instance, is, he says, a sandwich of two pictures – one at 1/3sec and one at 1/250sec – because he couldn't get the sharp lion and blurry trees in one exposure. He gives some great insights, which is rare among photographers at the top of their game, and nearly every picture is a stunner. Look out for an in-depth interview with Andy and how he made these pictures in an upcoming issue of AP. Jeff Meyer





Share your views and opinions with fellow AP readers every week





Picture post

I am writing to tell you just how much I enjoy the writings of Ogden Chesnutt in the Final Frame segment of AP. I never miss his stories; in fact, this is what I tend to read before anything else. His adventures and his character

never fail to deliver memorable reading. Is it just me, or does it have a sort of film noir atmosphere to it?

Anyway, I have a thought on how his column could be even more interesting. Ogden created a Flickr account some time ago, but unfortunately he has not been uploading very often. So I thought, why not combine this account with his writings? Why not upload those images of that heron he recently encountered? Or those pictures he took with the camera he borrowed from AP editor Damien Demolder? Or that footprint of the burglar he was after? Whenever he mentions in his stories an image that he took in various circumstances, I think it would be interesting to see them as a sort of visual support to an ongoing novel series. It's just an idea, but I think it's a good one.

Arpad Lukacs, London SE24

Thanks for the kind words, Arpad. I don't have a laptop of my own - I use Eli's - which slows me down, but I could certainly be better about updating my Flickr page. You do pose an interesting idea, though, so here is a picture from my misadventure in the Crayford Marshes, which you may have read about in AP 15 August. That's not a smile, by the way! - Ogden Chesnutt



The passing of a local hero

I've long advocated taking pictures of people and places for the simple reason that they're here now but gone tomorrow. This is something that was beautifully done by Newcastle photographer Jimmy Forsyth who, sadly, died recently. His photographs of Newcastle's Scotswood community deservedly won that lovely man the acclaim he never sought and, as he once told me, felt he didn't merit.

I was born in Scotswood and lived there only five years before we moved to what was regarded as a 'posh' fivestorey maisonette on a new estate. Naturally, my memories of the place are vague and yet, through the magic of Jimmy Forsyth's photographs,

I was able to revisit the area.

When I first encountered Jimmy during the '80s he was using a Russian Cosmic Symbol camera. Some years later I saw him in Newcastle Grainger Market using a battered old Lubitel TLR. But Jimmy's choice of camera never phased him. Although many of his images are technically a little awry, their content - that of a now long-gone, close-knit community - stand up as a fascinating archive of enormous value to historians. His images beautifully capture the rather stark and, as my late mum often said, occasionally grim era in which they were taken.

We've recently lost a local hero in the lovely Sir Bobby Robson, but many of us will mourn the passing of Jimmy Forsyth. His epitaph should be that of a man who simply took time to look around him and record what was there before - like the Scotswood community - it vanished forever.

Mick Bidewell, Tyne and Wear

Go astro

I liked the article on digiscoping by Barney Britton (AP 1 August), but I'd like to offer some alternative suggestions, if I may. Here are six reasons why terrestrial spotting scopes are not the best choice for digiscoping, and why small astronomical telescopes are:

1. Focal ratios are too high. Typical digiscoping focal ratios are f/13 or higher because you must use an eyepiece to obtain focus. This gives a long focal length (1,000mm or more) but a very slow photographic tool, which means they are susceptible to distortion-inducing heatwaves over distances and camera shake because a big tripod is needed to hold a 1,000mm lens with any stability. A small astronomical telescope will typically offer focal ratios of f/5.6-f/8 and focal lengths of 350-700mm without an eyepiece, or longer ones if an evepiece if needed.

Contrived attachment devices. Those Mechano-set attachments look like a brace for someone who has broken their neck, and can be avoided. Attachment to astronomical scopes is via regular bayonet lens adapters, either for DSLRs or pointand-shoot models.

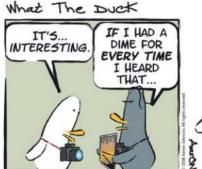
3. Focusing is crude. Almost no spotting scopes have fine focus control, which is a requirement for long focal length work. All decent astronomical scopes now feature ultra-smooth Crayford focusers with fine focus control.

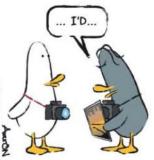
4. Vignetting. This is very difficult to avoid when digiscoping because spotting scopes are not designed for photography; astro scopes (ED

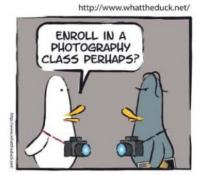


etter of the week

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For the birds

As a keen amateur wildlife photographer, I really enjoyed the focus on bird photography in AP 1 August. Last year, I was lucky enough to visit the Galapagos Islands and the article got me thinking about what a great location it is for photographing birds, as well as the other wildlife more widely associated with the place. Pelicans, flamingos, the comical blue-footed boobies (pictured), albatrosses, frigate birds with their bright-red puffed-up throats... the list is endless. The rules of the game are guite different there. though. The uniquely trusting nature of the wildlife means it's up to the photographer to impose his own limits and respect the animals' space. Their lack of fear of humans puts them entirely at our mercy. It's crucial we



maintain the fragile harmony of their world if we want to continue to enjoy it both with and without a camera. Chris Dunham, Leicestershire

versions) are, however. Two-inch eyepieces and adapters mean that even full-frame cameras can be used properly.

5. Cost. If anyone is looking for a way to get a decent image at low cost, then a 400mm f/5 achromatic telescope with a tripod mount can be had for around £110 and will take a much better image than a digiscope of the same cost.

6. Image quality. You simply cannot beat the image quality of a frontlens-only system, especially from an astronomical scope as they are all diffraction-limited, and sharpness, contrast and colour are all better when using them.

Astronomical scopes can be bought from large photography dealers or directly from the manufacturers and distributors. Look for companies like Orion, Celestron, Meade, Tech Instruments and William Optics.

Richard Anderson, Toronto, Canada

At arm's length

'Holding a camera at arm's length can never be as stable as the grip when using a viewfinder,' writes Nigel Cliff in Letters in AP 1 August. But why hold it at arm's length? Three of my cameras have fixed lenses and I use the screens to compose photos - but the only time I hold a camera at arm's length is when it's the only way to get the picture, such as leaning out over a wall or standing on tiptoe with the camera above my head.

The only other time I would need to hold the camera at arm's length would be if I have a problem with my glasses, since, as I am long-sighted, everything needs to be at arm's length or further. Could this be the explanation for the legions of people holding cameras at arm's length? Could they have undiagnosed long sight? Should there be crack teams of emergency opticians prowling famous beauty spots ready to offer instant diagnosis? Cherri Graebe, West Yorkshire

That sounds like a money-spinning idea! Some photographers are more stable than others, but as a rule it is easier to hold a camera steady when it is resting against your face as you look through the viewfinder - Angela Nicholson, technical editor

Mirror images

I was surprised to see in Angela Nicholson's article Lenses for bird photography (AP 1 August) that she included the two Samyang mirror lenses. These lenses are widely criticised on internet blogs and in reviews using such remarks as, 'My worst lens ever,' or, 'Used it once and never again'. These sort of comments abound, as do reports of 'soft' images, 'poor colour' and similar complaints. They are clearly not in the same class as the Sigma and Tamron lenses. Harold Gough, Berkshire

The fact is that these lenses are considered by many as an affordable alternative to traditional lenses. Although they have their faults, they are much lighter and more compact than traditional optics, hence their inclusion -Angela Nicholson, technical editor



AP reader **Susan Cave** recalls how a chance encounter with a great photographer led to a passion for mono

T was in the summer of either 1982 or '83 that a friend and I attended a Human League concert in London. We stayed an extra day to take in a few sights and, as I'd just bought an Olympus OM10, I tried a few shots in Trafalgar Square. It was my first 35mm camera and I was trying to make sense of all those strange figures on the lens barrel and shutter speed dial.

My friend was yelling for me to get a move on when a long-haired guy with a camera bag approached me. 'Having problems?' he grinned. I was indeed having problems. As the camera lacked the add-on manual adapter, I'd been trying to sort out shutter speeds and apertures when in actual fact all I needed to do was just set it on auto, select an aperture and fire away. I didn't know all this, of course, until my knight in shining armour told me.

My friend sat there waiting for me to take her picture, and I was about to do so when my charming new pal said, 'Hang on a minute.' He took the newspaper out of my pocket, opened it and stood sideways on to my friend. He explained that by using the paper to reflect light on to my friend's face it would help control the contrast. All this stuff is second nature to me now, but back then it was rather

GG He reached into his camera bag, pulled out two rolls of film and handed them to me. 'Try it,' he said. **You might like it 55**

like trying to understand ancient Greek. I pointed to this chap's bulky camera bag and asked if he were a professional photographer. He nodded and I made some joke about how he must be loaded. He smiled and said, 'I do OK'.

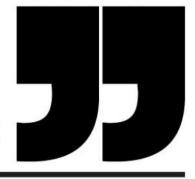
After I'd thanked him for his help he reached into his bag, pulled out two rolls of

film and handed them to me. 'Try it,' he said. 'You might like it'. What an absolute gent, I thought, and with a smile he was on his way.

A couple of months later, my late dad bought a copy of a now long-gone photo magazine. Inside was a portfolio by a worldfamous photographer called Bob Carlos Clarke. As I sat gazing at a shot of a crashed helicopter my eye went to the small portrait of Clarke at the head of the page. It was him - the guy who'd came to my aid. When I excitedly told my dad he was as stunned as I was. We noted from the magazine article that Bob was a huge fan of Kodak Tri-X. I rushed to my room and dug out the two rolls of film he'd given me: Tri-X! I'd noted that the films were b&w, but as I was then more interested in colour I hadn't got round to using them.

It was those rolls of film, plus a little help from my photographymad dad, that got me into processing and printing mono, which

I've been doing ever since. It was so sad when Bob took his own life, and he has been saddled with the 'troubled genius' label. He may have ended his life deeply troubled, but I won't forget the kindness he showed to an out-of-her-depth Geordie lass trying to get to grips with her first camera.



Your thoughts or views (about 500 words) should be sent to 'Backchat' at the usual AP address (see page 3). A fee of £50 will be paid on publication



STEVE BLOOM EXPLAINS HOW HE BATTLED WITH REDUCED VISIBILITY AND USED AVAILABLE LIGHT TO CAPTURE THIS GRACEFUL ELEPHANT IMAGE

TOOK this image in the Andaman Islands in India while I was working on my book Elephant! I wanted a dramatic image for the final pages - something that hadn't been seen before. I'd already photographed elephants from the air (see AP 2 May), so I thought I'd try photographing elephants underwater, which is the complete opposite of an aerial image.

I had to do a lot of research to find an elephant I could photograph in this way. I made three trips to India and did numerous dives to assess how I would go about taking this shot. I had to work out how close to the elephant I had to be, the best time of day to take the shot and the right kind of lighting conditions. It was important to spend time with the elephant on shore to make sure he was comfortable with me. There has to be mutual trust. If he didn't want me near him, he could easily have attacked me and those tusks aren't small! I had a diver with me who was looking out for danger and this meant I could concentrate on taking pictures.

There are several factors to consider when taking pictures underwater - most importantly, I had to make sure my camera was completely protected. I used a Subal camera housing for my Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III and 15mm fisheye lens. This is a waterproof box and the camera fits snugly inside. It has a glass dome at the front for the lens and there are several levers that link to the camera buttons. This means you can control the settings as you would if you weren't underwater. The housing can be used at a maximum depth of 70m and is completely watertight. It is heavy to hold on land, but underwater it is much lighter.

Visibility was one of the main challenges. Water is dense and doesn't transmit light easily. Wearing goggles also makes it difficult to see what you are doing. For most underwater photography you have to be close to the subject, and if the subject is more than a few feet away it disappears from view. At times I was within touching distance of the elephant, and because I was using a wideangle lens so close to the subject the legs in the foreground look much larger than the back legs. This gives the elephant a three-dimensional look.

There were other challenges, too. I had to make sure I stayed at the same depth in the water and swam fast to

GG Above ground you don't always notice the texture of an elephant, but underwater the light brings this out 55

The AP experts

Each week, one of our team of experts of Steve Bloom, David Clapp, Tom Mackie and Clive Nichols will reveal the secrets behind one of their great images. This week it's Steve Bloom

STEVE BLOOM Wildlife The world's leading wildlife photographer is bringing his expertise to AP. Steve has written dozens of book on wildlife photograp



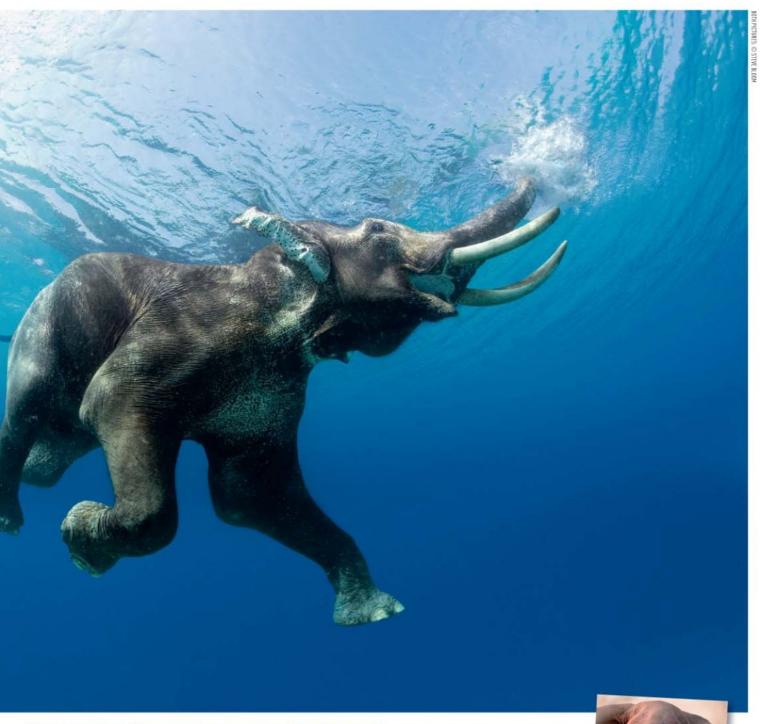
keep up with the elephant, as well as thinking about how I was going to take the actual image. It would have been difficult to focus manually when swimming along with the elephant, so I used autofocus. I used aperture priority and varied my aperture between f/5.6 and f/8. This enabled me to use a fast enough shutter speed, at approximately 1/320sec, to freeze the movement. I like to use motion blur in my images to create a sense of excitement, but I didn't feel it was appropriate for this subject. Instead, I wanted to capture the sparkle and definition of the elephant's skin. I set my camera to auto white balance and shot this in raw.

I took the image early in the morning. The light was penetrating the water and falling on the elephant's head and back. I prefer my images to look natural, so I didn't use any artificial light. Above ground you don't always notice the texture of an elephant, but underwater the light brings this out. If it had been an overcast day, I wouldn't have been able to capture this dappled light effect and the overall image would have been flat. The contrast would also have been less obvious. Fortunately, the sun was shining and I was able to use this to bring out the detail of the elephant.

After I had taken the image, I looked at the balance of colour and made subtle adjustments to recreate how it looked at the time. The highlights on the elephant

were a little too cyan, so I used a mask in Photoshop to desaturate these slightly. I also boosted the saturation a little to bring out the blue of the surrounding water. However, you have to be careful not to make the colours look overly saturated. For me, photography is about presenting a familiar subject in a fresh light, which I hope I have done here. AP

As part of Amateur Photographer's 125th anniversary celebrations, Steve Bloom is hosting a wildlife photography seminar on 14 October 2009. For more information visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/ features or call 0203 148 4321.





Talking technique

I spent nearly a month working on the underwater elephants series of images. It took several attempts to capture the composition I wanted. I kept diving and shooting relentlessly, and eventually I captured an image I was happy with. I tried photographing the elephant from different angles, induding cropping in tight and shooting wide. This is one of the other images from the series and shows the elephant at a much doser range. You can clearly see the detail on the elephant's face and the expression in its eye.



To see more images by Steve, visit www.stevebloomphoto.com. Steve's book 'Elephant!', published by Thames & Hudson priced £24.95, is available from www.stevebloomshop.com.



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Amateur Photographer's guide to Britain's best photo locations. This week... Arran

Keith Fergus



Colin Prior, Gordon Stainforth and Guy Edwardes Favourite locations Galloway and Lochaber Approach 'I love being out in the mountains or on the Scottish coast taking photographs, and I want my photos to reflect this enjoyment along with the beauty of the island'

T just 20 miles long and about ten miles wide, Arran is an ancient mountainous island that feels much bigger than its 55-mile circumference. Situated in the Firth of Clyde off the west coast of Scotland, Arran's wintry darkness and endless daylight in summer add to the mystery and drama that have been luring curious visitors going back as far as 9,500 BC.

Arran can be as vexing for photographers as it is for the geologists and historians who grapple with the weather and the light while

seeking to understand the island's stone beaches, jagged peaks and ancient monoliths. But with patience, there are many great shots to be had.

Keith Fergus, from Glasgow, has been visiting Arran regularly for years, building up an impressive portfolio of images from the island and a list of all the best locations for taking pictures. He suggests the best months to shoot are from September through the autumn months when it's quieter due to fewer tourists, and the sun rises gently in the east and sets dramatically in the west.

NEED TO KNOW...

get there

Ferries leave from Ardrossan, which is about 45 minutes from Glasgow on the Scottish mainland. The ferry from Ardrossan takes about 55 minutes and costs about £7 for foot passengers. If you're planning to take your car, expect to pay about £70 return.
There are five ferries each way per day in the summer and four in winter. If you don't plan to bring your car, the island is well connected and there are buses waiting at the port to take you all over the island. For information on bus services, visit www.travelinescolland.com/SC_Western/timetables_SC_ Western.htm

Where to stay

Brodick runs the gamut from really expensive hotels to caravan parks, and it has numerous B&Bs. Lochranza also has a caravan park and a nice selection of B&Bs. There's not a great deal in Machrie, but Kildonan and Whiting Bay have several options.

Where to eat

Arran makes most of its money from tourism these days, so the island is well set up for eating. Seafood abounds and most of the fish is freshly caught.

Suggested

There are two main roads on Arran: one is about 56 miles long, encircling the island; and the other runs east to west through mountain glens. Whether travelling by car or bus, Keith suggests following the route from Brodick through Lochranza, Machrie/Blackwaterfoot and Kildonan to Whiting Bay.



Lochranza Castle Canon EOS 400D, 17-40mm, 1/20sec at f/22



Lochranza Castle, sitting on the north of the island, isn't the biggest of castles, but with its surrounding hills and large loch it is very dramatic. From November

to February this area doesn't get any sunlight at all because the sunrise never gets above the hills surrounding the castle. The castle is quite difficult to photograph because the sea comes right up to its walls during high tide. You're often limited in the angles you can take, but when the tide is out you can

wander out a little further for a wider view. On the day I was photographing I spotted this boat resting on the seashore. I decided to include it to add depth and foreground interest. The scene really needed this, because without foreground interest it would be just another bog-standard shot of the castle. I didn't want a straightforward postcard shot, so I took the photograph from a low angle to give it prominence. I also did this to compensate for the fact that the dramatic light hadn't yet hit the castle walls.

DID YOU KNOW...

Wildlife

More than 200 bird species have been recorded on the Isle of Arran, including the black guillemot, eider, peregrine falcon and golden eagle. Other wildlife to be found include the red deer, red squirrel, badger, otter, adder and common lizards. Offshore are harbour porpoises, basking sharks and dolphins.

Green Moss at Machrie

Canon EOS 350D, 17-40mm, 0.8sec at f/22



The good thing about Arran is that on one side of the island you can catch the sunrise, and the

other side you get a brilliant sunset. Machrie lies on the west coast, and when the tide is out you can capture lovely patterns in boulders that have been smoothed over for thousands of years. Also, during sunset the light will produce strong colours on the moss. Framing for a pattern is tricky, though. I made this an upright image to lead the eye through because a landscape format felt too unbalanced and would have included a building and the road. Those would have been distracting elements, and it was too much of a sweep. I only wanted the patterns. There was a nice sky that day, but it was a blank blue and didn't add anything by being in the frame so I decided to take out as much of it as possible. With my tripod set up on its lowest level, I angled the camera down towards the rocks so I could focus on their colours

Standing Stones at Machrie

Canon EOS 400D, 17-40mm, 1/15sec at f/22



From the main road at Machrie you will notice a stone circle near an abandoned farmhouse.

It's a quiet, barren place with a real sense of history about it. The main stone in the middle is about 12ft (3.6m) tall and quite imposing. Arran's highest point, Goat Fell, is in the background, ider owledg so I tried to frame the The isle of Arran has been inhabited since the Neolithic period peak in between the large stones. I shot this one late afternoon in winter, so I framed slightly towards the right to include the long shadows. As I waited for the sky to clear. I got a nice contrast between the stones, the grass and the sky. I used a polariser to enhance this and tried four or five angles to include the peak. This was tricky because the main stone kept blanking out or was off-centre. I wanted to keep the three stones separated, but if I moved too far to the left, the stones would mask each other.

Boat in Whiting Bay

Canon EOS 400D, 70-300m, 1/100sec at f/22



Six miles south of Brodick is Whiting Bay, which is slightly sheltered from the elements and often quite

peaceful. I headed out early in the morning in the hope of getting strong light, but instead found a strong sea

mist. The mist was diffusing the sun and created a really tranguil atmosphere.

> When this boat came into view I considered how to frame it and decided to try to include the darker bands of rippled water to create foreground interest. Standing on the

shore, I zoomed in to 300mm to flatten the shot and make the bands more prominent. I wasn't concerned too much about detail in the boat, as I was after an image with a sort of snapshot feel to it. You don't get that type of shot very often this far north, and I really wanted to play up this atmosphere of peace and calmness.

Holy Isle dawn

Canon EOS 400D, 17-40mm, 1/10sec at f/22



One morning in Lamlash I saw these really black clouds over the sea out to the west, and after a

while it looked like some light might sneak through. I walked about half a mile before the whole of Holy Isle was just a silhouette and I knew I could get a dramatic image, but the exposure was tricky.

I was happy for a lot of the image to be thrown into silhouette nsider knowledge The Scottish Gaelic dialect as the sun came up, so I took a reading from the water followed by a reading from of Arran died out when the last speaker, Donald Craig, died in the 1970s the sky. There was a difference of about seven or eight exposures, so l metered for the band of water, which I felt was the midtone. I then used a 3-stop ND filter to darken down the clouds and add to the overall drama, and this also served to darken the foreground.

Pladda dusk

Canon EOS 400D, 17-40mm, 8secs at f/22



I've been to Pladda many times and had this shot in my mind for a while. I wanted an image where

the rocks lead your eve through the frame out to the distant lighthouse, but I needed the tide to be out.

For this picture I was standing on a rock 30-40ft (9-12m) out to where the sea would be when the tide was in. I wanted to be far from the shoreline and focus on this

> cluster of rocks. I was hoping for a strong sunset, but there were only clouds so I tried to make the most of what was there. Like the mossy boulders at Machrie, I kept my tripod low to fill the frame with the rocks and then set a long

exposure to flatten out the sea. This allowed me to make the most of the rocks and the clear water, and produce a moody image with lots of atmosphere.

Pladda dawn

Canon EOS 400D, 17-40mm, 10secs at f/22



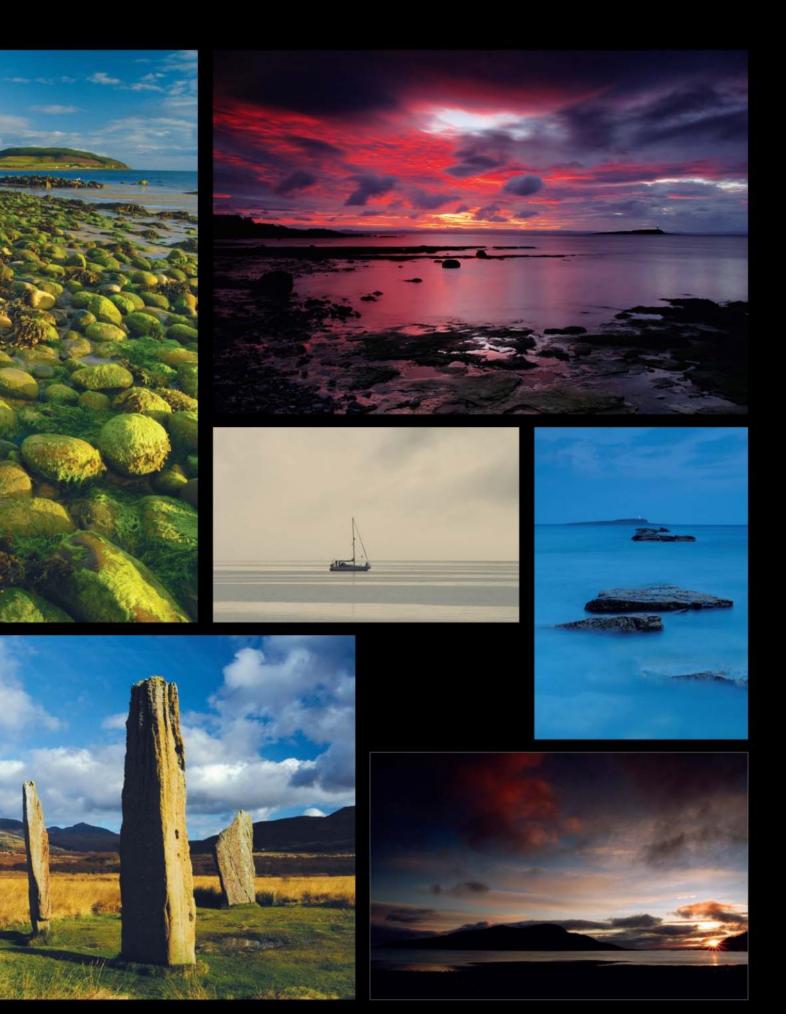
Pladda, the wee island with the lighthouse in the distance, has long been a favourite subject of mine.

I love this spot because the lighthouse gives you something to focus on. It was very cloudy on this particular morning, but it ended up being a sunrise quite unlike anything I've ever seen. I used a polarising filter, but beyond that there was no manipulation of this image. I took my exposure from the water so I could get a nice midtone, then again from the rocks in the foreground and the sky, which was getting brighter. I didn't want the foreground to go black because it was adding nice interest, so I used a 2-stop and 3-stop ND filter. The water was picking up nice colour from the sky, so I needed those five stops of neutral density to keep it from going black. Finally, I took a long exposure to saturate the colour and help flatten out the sea, which was choppy. By flattening the water I was able to catch the colours reflected from the sky.



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The AP expert... Clive Nichols

Clive Nichols is one of the UK's most respected garden photographers. As well as being one of AP's *Photo Insight* experts, he runs regular workshops for the Royal Horticultural Society and is a judge for the International Garden Photographer of the Year competition

The aim of the day

To celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew, we invited six AP readers to take part in a photography workshop with photographer Clive Nichols. The readers received tuition from Clive on many aspects of garden photography A day with

Clive Nichols

Expert garden photographer **Clive Nichols** whisks six AP readers off to the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew, Surrey, to share his top garden photography tips. **Gemma Padley** reports

T this time of year, Kew Gardens in Surrey is awash with colour and texture. Burgeoning flower borders, intricately patterned bark and spiky tree branches offer fantastic photo opportunities. The Royal Botanic Gardens, to give Kew its official name, celebrates its 250th anniversary this year, and to mark the event we teamed up with garden photography expert Clive Nichols to offer six AP readers the chance to spend the day exploring the wealth of flora and fauna on offer. Clive was on hand to impart his expertise and wisdom. Although the wind and rain did their best to destroy morale, spirits could not be dampened.

Clive met the readers at the Victoria

Gate entrance at 9am for the briefing. Each reader brought their own camera and lenses with them – a selection of wide, telephoto and macro optics if they owned them – and a tripod. Tripods are permitted in the grounds, but photographers are not allowed to use them in the glasshouses for health and safety reasons.

The 300-acre site is too large to cover in one day, let alone a morning, so we had to be selective in the areas we chose to shoot. A recce the day before had given Clive an idea of some of the best places to capture a variety of shots. Rather than sticking to conventional flower images, the aim was to show the diversity of the gardens. While flowers were undoubtedly the main draw, the readers quickly

Julie Bradbury's image (above) balances shape and colour to create a striking flower scene

The readers

AP invited six readers to take part in a photography workshop with Clive Nichols at Kew Gardens with the aim of creating striking images of the gardens to mark the 250th anniversary

Julie Bradbury



Aged 41, Julie lives in Wallingford, Oxfordshire, and is a former garden and parks adviser for the National Trust. Julie used to

take images for her job and was inspired to start taking her photography more seriously. She currently uses an Olympus E-410 with a 17.5-45mm lens

Gareth Gerreli



Living in Southend-on-Sea in Essex, Gareth, 31, currently works as a bank officer, but is keen to start a career in photography. He

especially enjoys taking pictures of nature and landscapes. Gareth has a Nikon D80 with a 70-300mm lens

Firas Hammami



Firas, 40, lives in Bristol. where he works in customer service and IT. He is just starting out in photography and is looking to buy a

DSLR. Firas uses a Fujifilm FinePix A360 and enjoys photographing many subjects, but says the day at Kew has fuelled his interest in garden photography

Carol Cotter



Carol, 49, lives in Crewe, Cheshire, and works as a teaching assistant. She uses a Canon EOS 40D with 70-200mm lens and enjoys

macro flower photography. She says: 'The workshop has been great and I am keen to continue my garden photography'

Linda Heywood



Living in London, Linda is looking to pursue a career in photography. She currently uses an Olympus E-520 with 50-200mm and

14-54mm lenses. 'I feel my photography has turned a corner after today,' says Linda. 'I am seeing the possibilities of photography from a new angle, which is really exciting'

Abigail Keyes



Abigail, 17, lives in Pinner, Greater London, and is applying for university courses. She would like to study either English or

photography, and is looking for courses that combine both subjects. Abigail uses a Nikon D60 with 18-55mm lens





Carol's waterfall images clearly show the effect that changing the shutter speed can have on a moving subject. She has cropped in close to create a tight composition that focuses the viewers' attention on the gushing water



Clive encouraged the readers to think about the interplay of colour in their images. 'Bold colours work well as long as you make sure they don't clash,' he says. 'In the image below, Gareth uses a similar colour combination to Carol's (left) but in reverse'



saw the potential of a range of other plant life and subjects that were on show.

The day started at the waterfall near the Davies Alpine House in the south of the gardens where Clive showed the readers the effect of altering their shutter speeds. Choosing a small aperture to give a good depth of field, the participants used a slow shutter speed to show the motion of the water and a fast shutter speed to freeze it.

The next stop was the Duke's Garden, a picturesque walled garden with a range of coloured flowers. For shooting blooms close up, Clive recommended a large aperture









Talking technique

In these images Clive demonstrates how to create aesthetically pleasing flower images through aperture control. For the first image (above left), Clive set a small aperture to give a large depth of field and used a slow shutter speed. 'Stopping down makes the background more obvious in the frame but the slow shutter speed creates subject blur if the flowers sway in the breeze,' he says. 'Both these factors are reduced when you open up the lens and increase your shutter speed (above right).' Clive took this image at f/3.5 using a shutter speed of 1/320sec. The large aperture blurs the background and makes the flower stand out in the frame, while the fast shutter speed keeps the main subject sharp. 'Think about the effect you want to create,' says Clive, 'otherwise you may end up with a blurred image or a cluttered background."

GG I enjoy taking close-up images of flowers but have always found photographing wider garden views more difficult. After today, I feel more confident in my ability to try these compositions 55 Carol

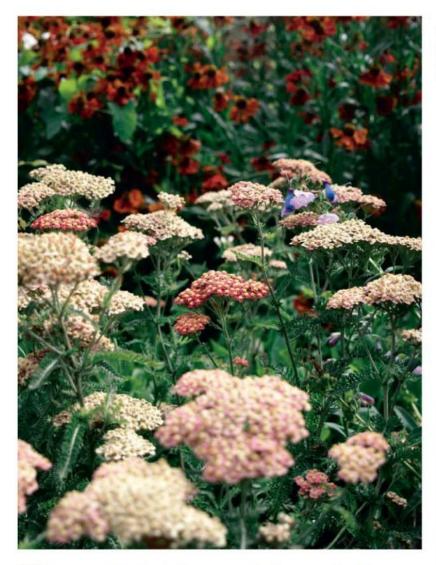


to throw the background out of focus. 'It's important not just to think about your subject, but also how to frame your shot to give the best possible background,' he says. 'Ask yourself, "If I move a foot to the left or right, would this give me a more interesting backdrop?" Or, "If I tilt my camera down slightly, could I get rid of a distracting detail in the frame?" The background can make or break an image."

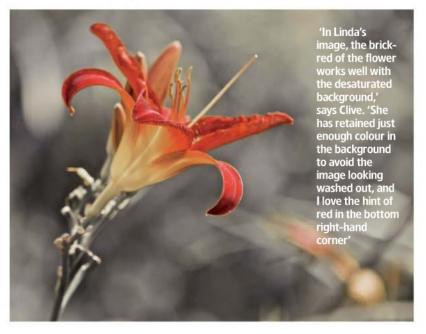
Clive also discussed how to make the most of the available light. 'Quite often you'll be working on days when the sky is not that interesting, but slightly overcast light is ideal for shooting flowers and tree bark,' he explains. 'Bright sunlight destroys detail and creates too much contrast between highlights and shadows. The clouds act as a diffuser, which softens the light. The exception is early morning and in the evening, but if you are shooting during the day less contrasty light is best.

Many people assume that the sun should be behind you for flower photography, but it is best to shoot into the light,' he adds. 'This creates a backlighting effect that makes the flowers spring to life. You have to watch out for flare on the lens, but using a lens hood minimises this.

Clive emphasised the advantage of using a zoom lens to reframe compositions without the need to uproot the tripod. 'If you alter your focal length, you can dramatically change your composition while leaving your camera set up in the same position,' says Clive. 'This is useful in garden photography when you may only



GG The more I looked, the more photo opportunities I noticed. There were so many textures, patterns and colours to capture 55 Firas



Julie subtly balances reds, creams and pinks in her flowerbed composition



have 20 minutes before the light disappears. In this way you can get a variety of shots quickly

Another thing Clive stressed was the importance of balancing different colours in the frame. 'Be aware of how different colours complement each other,' he says. 'In my photograph of one of the gardens at Kew (on the top left of page 25), white, blue and purple plants work together - there are no disruptive reds or bright oranges. Think about how you can reflect this sense of harmony in your composition. Sometimes contrasting colours work well, as in Carol and Gareth's images (see page 24), where yellow is nicely juxtaposed with green and purple, but colour has to be handled with care.

Clive explained how to create an idyllic garden view by building up layers to create depth. 'If you position your tripod along the edge of the border and slightly side on, you can pack your composition with plants,' he says. 'When I'm shooting a flower border, I'll focus on sections of the flowerbed and eliminate others depending on the composition I'm trying to create.

Leaving flowers to one side, Clive marched the readers to the Wollemi pine area, where



Talking technique

You don't always have to photograph a scene from eye level. With a little adjustment to your shooting angle, a conventional subject can appear abstract. In this image, Clive has photographed the bridge at Sackler Crossing close up to create a graphic composition that is not at all what you would expect from a typical bridge image. He has converted the picture to monochrome for impact.



they experimented with unusual shooting angles and looked at using patterns and shape in their compositions. 'By looking up the side of tree trunks, into the centre of sprayed branches or even observing the curves of hanging branches, the participants created some interesting shots,' says Clive. 'The monkey puzzle tree in particular provided many great opportunities to create textured and patterned images. The readers experimented with depth of field and selective manual focus, and noticed the effect that pulling the background in and out of focus had on the shape and form of the leaves."

After a quick break for tea and cake and a glance at the images taken so far, the final stop was Sackler Crossing - an idyllic river platform with a curving bridge that

provided plenty of scope for more abstract compositions. Clive encouraged the readers to try shooting from a low angle or cropping in on part of the scene to create impact.

As the morning drew to a close, Clive and the participants wandered back to Victoria Gate tired but happy. It may have seemed as if they had trawled the length and breadth of Kew Gardens, but they had only scratched the surface.

'You would need weeks to explore all the photo opportunities here,' laughs Clive. 'The main challenge today was battling with the wind. In windy conditions you need a fast shutter speed to freeze the subject and it wasn't always easy to achieve sharp images. The readers were determined to make the most of the day, however, and have created some excellent shots. A brilliant effort all round.' AP

Carol makes the most of bold colours in her image (above), while the recurring shapes in Firas's monkey puzzle tree image (below left) create a sense of depth. Abigail's unusual tree image (below right), focuses on part of the bark



Kew Gardens

The Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew was created in 1759 by Lord Capel of Tewkesbury and is an internationally renowned botanical research centre

Location

Kew Gardens is located in Richmond, Surrey. Tel: 0208 332 5655

Admission prices

Adults: £13 Concessions: £11 Children under 17 with an adult: free

Opening times

From 29 March to 31 August: Monday-Friday, 9.30am-6.30pm and at weekends and bank holidays until 7.30pm.

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With special thanks to the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew and IGPOTY. For information about events marking the gardens's 250th anniversary, visit http://250.kew.org. For general enquiries visit www.kew.org or call 0208 332 5655

The dosing date for **IGPOTY 2010** is 30 November 2009. This year, photographers can enter their work in a new category called 'MuckIn4Life' in association with DEFRA. For more information visit http://www.igpoty. com/muckinforlife.asp?parent=news



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36mm	420g	12 kg	

KOOD PRO HEAD WITH MINI RACK QUICK RELEASE PAD



- Friction and Lock knobs
- Marked panoramic degrees and lock
- Mini Rack Quick release pad, ideal for focussing on macro or close up, with push pin safety release

Ball Size	Weight	Will Hold	
36mm	400g	8kg	
44mm	538g	12kg	
54mm	755g	18kg	

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Rowan Lamb Cambridge

Rowan, 28, studied a degree in documentary photography at Newport University. He mainly shoots in black & white, and enjoys creating abstract images from the debris he sees on the street – objects people commonly overlook such as dirt, litter and general artefacts that are in the process of decay. He hopes to exhibit his work in a local gallery and would one day love to buy a 10x8in camera.



Broken windscreen 1 Rowan added a vignette and increased the contrast to create a 'dark and depressing' mood Canon EOS 400D, 18-55mm, 1/160sec at f/9, ISO 100

Barcelona scaffold 2 For his image of the Sagrada Familia in Spain, Rowan used light to accentuate texture Canon EOS 400D, 35mm, 1/30sec at f/5.6, ISO 1600

Swan
3 Rowan accentuated the natural vignette created by the water around the swan's nest during post-processing Canon EOS 400D, 35mm, 1/2000sec at f/2, ISO 200







Gary Smith

Essex

Gary, 38, started photography when his children were born to capture them as they grew older. When he bought a DSLR to replace his compact camera, Gary resolved to make as much use out of it as possible. 'Photography has given me a creative outlet I never had before,' he says. 'I enjoy looking for new photographic opportunities and now see places in a new light.' Gary is drawn to the Essex coast and countryside, but he also takes his camera with him to work where he photographs London life and architecture.

Lonely house
In this eerie image, Gary
has thrown the foreground out of focus but kept the house sharp Nikon D40, 55-200mm, 1/40sec at f/6.3, ISO 400

Windmill
2 Gary included only part
of John Webb's Mill in Essex in the frame to create an unusual composition Nikon D40, 18-55mm, 1/1600sec at f/10, ISO 400



Mel Boyle Belfast

Mel, 37, had never entered a competition before this year's EISA contest, which had the theme Water (see pages 57-61 of this issue). His portfolio from the surfer's haven of Tullan Strand, in Co Donegal, Ireland, was so impressive that he was named the UK winner: 'Strong winds created backwash on the waves, which caused the sand to shift,' he says. 'There were lots of reflections and contrast. I went for a walk and found these striking scenes.'

Surfer
1 On a cold January
morning, Mel spotted
this surfer getting ready to brave the waves Canon EOS 30D, 55-250mm, 1/400sec at f/20, ISO 500

Warming up 2 These surfers were bouncing up and down trying to warm up their muscles before entering the cold water Canon EOS 30D, 55-250mm, 1/100sec at f/20, ISO 500

Tullan Strand
3 These men, wearing thick coats in the blustery weather, were walking their dogs just beyond the surfers Canon EOS 30D, 55-250mm, 1/800sec at f/14, ISO 500

Bundoran
4 The town of Bundoran lies just beyond the beach of Tullan Strand. Mel cropped his images to panoramas to better emphasise the expanse Canon EOS 30D, 17-85mm, 1/800sec at f/22, ISO 500





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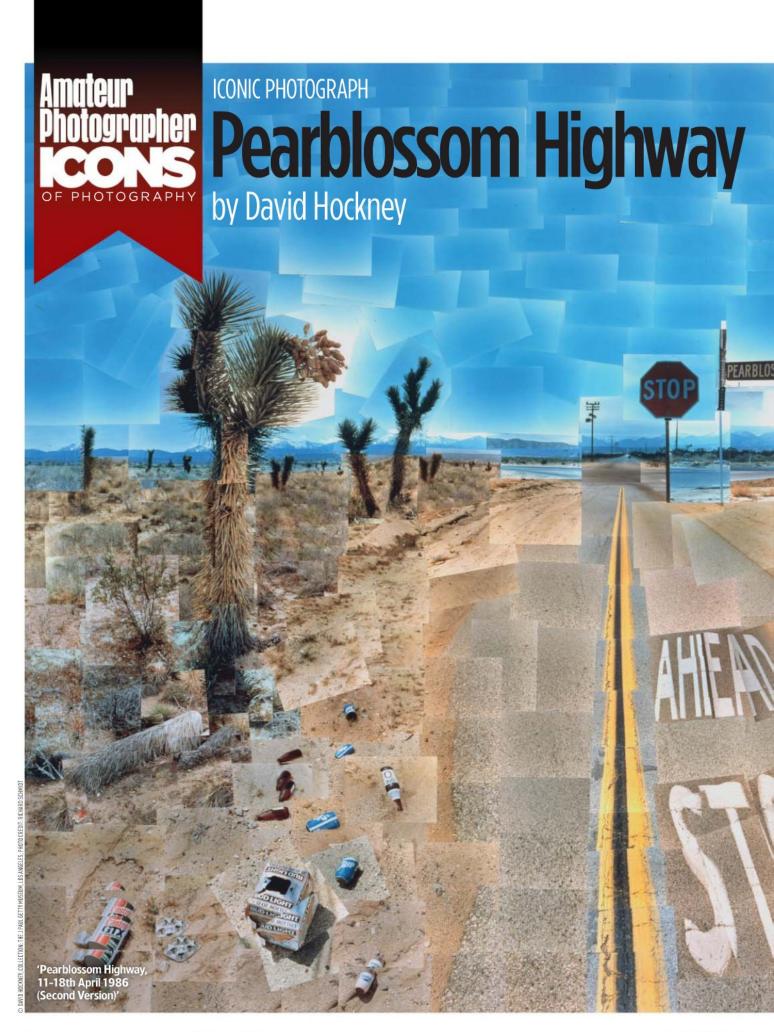


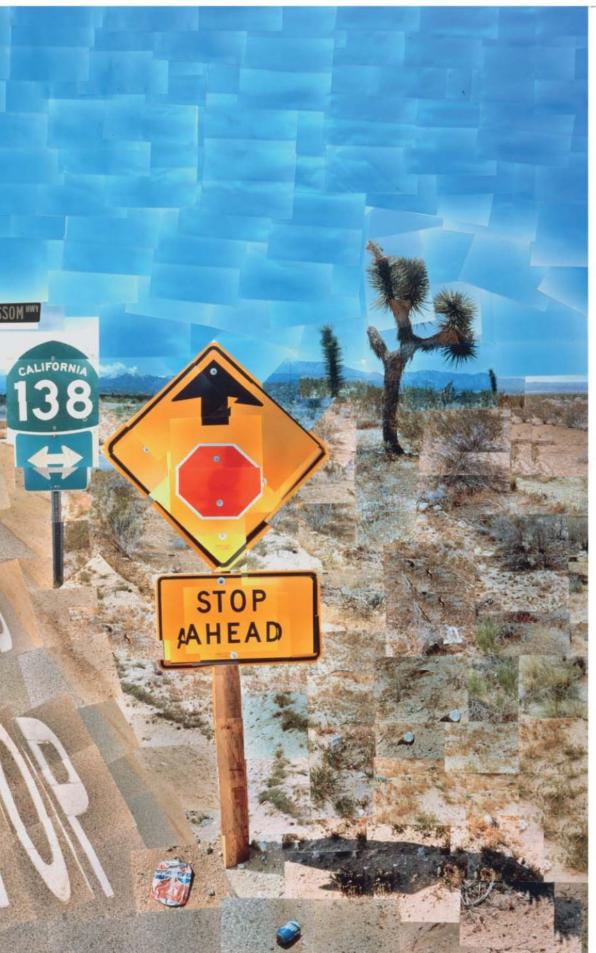
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David Hockney's most memorable and ambitious 'joiner' used hundreds of images to create one vibrant, complex and multi-layered artwork. **David Clark** explains how it was made

AVID Hockney's intense period of photographic work reached its dazzling finale in 'Pearblossom Highway, 11-18 April 1986, #2'. This large-scale photo collage, measuring approximately 6ft 5inx9ft 4in (1.9x2.8m) and shot over a seven-day period, is made up of hundreds of individual images, taken from multiple viewpoints. When it was made, Hockney was already well established as one of the world's most popular living artists. Although the idea of photographic collage wasn't new, he radically reinterpreted the concept to create a dynamic multi-layered artwork.

Hockney had experimented with photography from the early 1970s. However, he was frustrated with what he saw as photography's limitations and wanted to escape from what he regarded as the medium's static, 'one-eyed' perspective. 'Photography is all right,' he declared, 'if you don't mind looking at the world from the point of view of a paralysed cyclops, for a split second, but that's not how the world really is." Nevertheless



'Nova + Bill Brandt with Self Portrait (Although They Were Watching This Picture Being Made). Pembroke Studios, 8th May 82'



Hockney's photographic work is explored in Hockney on Photography (1988), which includes numerous images and extensive interviews with Hockney. It's out of print, but second-hand copies are available at www. amazon.co.uk. His photographs are also included in Hockney's Pictures by Gregory Evans (2004).

Hockney's official website is www.hockneypictures.com.

It superficially resembles a conventional landscape, as it has a rectangular frame and a foreground, horizon and sky. Yet it bears little similarity to the actual landscape in which Hockney was working. He has re-shaped the space, compressing perspective and putting objects together that were actually hundreds of feet apart Hockney created this large-scale

joiner with the help of his assistants while on a journey around the area. 'We chose deliberately a classical American subject - a desert crossroads photographed many times,' Hockney later said in an interview with fellow artist Paul Joyce (reproduced in the book Hockney on Photography). 'The viewer is forced to wander around the picture because I was literally wandering around the area. When you first look at it, it almost could be a conventional picture. It's only after half a minute that you realise it can't be, and that keeps you moving in.'

He did two versions of 'Pearblossom Highway' - a smaller one to explore the idea and to use as reference, and the second, much larger version shown here. It was photographed over seven days and took up to a month to assemble. Hockney changed the colour of the sky 'two or three times' before he was happy with it. Objects such as signs and the lettering on the road were photographed many different ways, and hundreds of pictures were rejected on the way to completing the image.

In Paul Joyce's interview, Hockney

went on to explain the thinking behind the way in which 'Pearblossom Highway' was constructed. 'That picture was not just about a crossroads, but about us driving around,' he said. 'I'd had three days of driving and being the passenger. The driver and the passenger see the road in different ways. When you drive you read all the road signs, but when you're the passenger you don't, you can decide to look where you want.

'The picture dealt with that: on the right-hand side of the road it's as if you're the driver, reading road traffic signs to tell you what to do and so on; and on the left-hand side it's as if you're a passenger going along the road more slowly, looking all around. So the picture is about driving without the car being in it."

'Pearblossom Highway' was at once Hockney's most ambitious and successful joiner, and the one that brought his photographic work to a logical conclusion. The development of his idea meant making bigger and bigger collages that took increasing amounts of time to assemble. He had almost stopped painting in his intensive joiner period, but was now impatient to return to it, armed with the ideas he had explored with a camera.

Nevertheless, despite his prolific output, Hockney's joiners remain one of the most popular aspects of his lifetime's work. They expand our ideas of what photography is capable of recording and, 23 years after he abandoned them, remain as fresh, exciting and inventive as when they were first created. AP

Events of 1986

OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Jan

Plans to build a tunnel underneath the English Channel are announced by the UK and French governments

Jan

The Space Shuttle Challenger explodes shortly after take-off. The seven astronauts on board are killed

April

John McCarthy, a British journalist, is kidnapped and held captive by Islamic Jihad terrorists in Lebanon

April

A nuclear reactor at the Chernobyl nuclear plant in the Ukraine explodes. killing 56 people. The disaster results in widespread radioactive contamination that renders large areas uninhabitable

Oct

A huge earthquake hits San Salvador, resulting in the deaths of approximately 1,500 people

Oct

US President Ronald Reagan meets Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in Iceland to discuss arms reduction

Dec

Andrei Sakharov, a Soviet dissident, is allowed to return to Moscow after years of exile

photography also had its attractions for Hockney and he began to experiment with it. He started working intensively on combining multiple photographic images in early 1982. He initially used a Polaroid SX-70 camera to photograph small sections of a subject, usually shot from the same viewpoint. He arranged these images as composites, which he called 'joiners', in square or rectangular grid patterns.

'I quickly discovered that you didn't have to match things up at all,' said Hockney. 'In fact, you couldn't possibly match them, and it wasn't necessary. The joiners were much closer to the way that we actually look at things, closer to the truth of experience.

Later, in 1982, Hockney began working with 35mm cameras (including the Pentax Auto 110) and borderless prints. These images were more complex, because as well as being created over a period of time, they were also photographed from multiple viewpoints - an idea borrowed from Cubism. In these joiners, Hockney often rejected the usual four-sided frame and spread the prints in a random shape across the board on which they were mounted.

Hockney continued this work during the next four years and by 1986 was creating elaborate photo collages that used a large number of overlapping images shot over several days. In April he worked on his most ambitious joiner, 'Pearblossom Highway', which was made on a crossroads in the wide-open landscape of southern California in the US.

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How to submit your pictures

Send up to six prints, slides or images on CD (please include the original files from the camera along with your submitted versions on your CD). Tell us a little about the pictures and, if you can, include details of equipment used and exposure settings.

Send your photographs to 'Appraisal' at our usual address (see page 3). Please enclose an SAE if you would like them returned.

Buttermere Lake in winter Jiri Kuchar

Nikon D40, 12mm, 0.8secs at f/22, ISO 200, 0.9 ND grad, CPL filter, tripod

This is a difficult landscape picture that Jiri has attempted because of the wide range in brightness and colours, and the different types of lighting that are present. The main challenge is that part of the subject is in full sunshine and part of it is in shade, so whereas the sunlit areas look warm, the shaded areas appear cold. The difficulty comes in making two very different white balances - in this case sunshine and shade - work in the same shot.

Jiri has captured a brilliant location, and his framing delivers a lot of impact. The waterfall rushing towards us and then disappearing off to the side creates a nice contrast with the stillness of the water in the lake. However, although this is a winter scene and the picture was taken on a cold day, it still looks too cold and the colours are not attractive: the white balance is all wrong, the water coming down the hillside looks too blue/cyan, and the grass in the foreground is too green. We therefore need to add some yellow, red and magenta to the picture to warm it up. I've done this using the Color Balance tool in Photoshop, adding yellow and red to the shadows, the midtones and the highlights, and then a bit of magenta to the midtones, which gives us a rich blue sky. What I've done is just a quick fix, though, and when adjusting a whole image like this there is a danger of oversaturating the areas that were already warm. If you were going to take your time over it, you would create a mask over the cold areas so you can add warmth to them without affecting other areas in the picture. This would allow you to balance the picture in a more realistic way.

Finally, at Jiri's suggestion, I've done a guick black & white conversion using the Channel Mixer (set to 60% Red. 20% Green and 20% Blue), and then increased the contrast in the midtones slightly to give a more dramatic effect.









See your pictures in print

Damien's picture of the week wins a £50 Jessops store voucher. The two runners-up each win a £25 voucher to spend on photobooks from Jessops' online service at www.jessops.com



Condor in flight Dale Mitchell

Nikon D300, 50mm. 1/60sec at f/16, ISO 100

Some people have all the luck, don't they? Here I am, sitting in an office in London, looking at a picture taken in Chile of a condor flying over the mountains in the Torres del Paine National Park. Dale says that he and his wife were walking at the bottom of these mountains when they saw this condor 'flying in his domain'. Dale couldn't help but capture this beautiful image, which will always be in his mind. It's a fantastic shot, and it reminds me of a particularly good CD cover for a Pan Pipes of the Andes album crossed with an Ansel Adams landscape - it's astonishing.

Dale has done a great job of getting the right exposure for this picture, and he's added a sepia tint, which is beautiful and gives a lovely warmth to the photograph. There's no hard white or hard black tone in the image, so it's very relaxing to look at, but at the same time it's very dramatic. The mountain range and the clouds are fantastic, and the positioning of the condor in the sky is perfect. It has appeared at exactly the right point and Dale has released the shutter at the right moment. It



really stands out against this part of the sky, but without the stark contrast that would have been present had it been against the brighter areas of the sky. We're therefore immediately aware of the condor, but without it jumping out and smacking us in the face. It's a great composition, and I love the colour

and toning. It's a brilliant picture.

Edited

Bizarrely, though, Dale sent this in for the vegetation round of Amateur Photographer of the Year and he didn't win, but it's not really surprising as there's not much vegetation in the picture. Had it been birds in flight or Chilean mountain ranges I'm certain it would have placed highly; had it

been covers for Pan Pipes of the Andes albums I'm certain it would have won. It's great picture, but it does demonstrate that you have to send in pictures that are appropriate for the round rather than pictures that are just brilliant. So, Dale, as a consolation prize, I'm awarding you picture of the week.



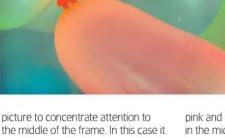
Balloons Vincent Nieass

Fujifilm FinePix S100fd. 1/27sec at f/2.8, ISO 100

This is a great idea, with lots of colour, and the soft natural window light Vincent has used to photograph the balloons is making them glow nicely. The highlights from the window emphasise the shape of the balloons, and there's an interesting mixture of contrasting and complementary

colours, shapes and tones.

The only thing that bothers me is the high saturation at the points where the balloons are tied. As a result, there are some eye-catching saturated areas close to the edge of the frame, which are drawing my eye away from the main subject. There also seems to be a lot of vignetting at the edges, and I'm not sure why this has occurred. It could be that Vincent has added this effect, as it looks like the sort of vignetting you might add in the darkroom to a black & white



would have worked had it not been for those bright pink and green patches of colour at the edge of the frame.

So, to counter this problem, I've cropped the image, but whereas we normally do this to get in closer to the subject, this time I've done it to remove the distracting elements at the edges. Without them, your eye is much more liberated and you are able to look around the frame in a more relaxed way. Although there is a bright

pink and bright orange balloon knot in the middle of the picture, in this instance it's OK because this is where we are meant to be looking.

Finally, it also looks as though Vincent has upped the saturation, and in a pop art sort of way it works: you can see that where the colours of the balloons are most saturated, the saturation has gone off the scale, leaving twodimensional colours that are almost fluorescent. It's a great idea - just don't leave any distracting elements so close to the edge of the frame.



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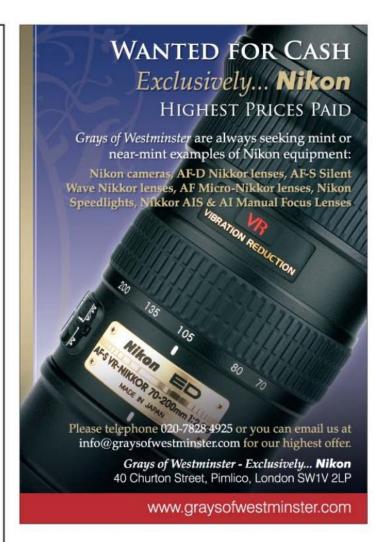
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Forthcoming tests

In the next few months AP hopes to run the following equipment through the most rigorous testing procedures in the industry...

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Welcome to our test, reviews and advice section. Over the next few pages we will present this week's equipment tests, reader questions and technique pointers

All our tests are conducted by people who understand the product area, as well as photography. We aim to discover any shortcomings, as well as finding those aspects that deserve praise. All our tests are thorough, honest and independent

Stealth Gear Extreme **Photographers Suit**

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OMPRISING four pieces, the Stealth Gear Extreme Photographers Suit aims to keep you warm and dry while out taking photographs, as well as providing a wealth of storage space. The main component of the suit is its jacket, which has ten external pockets and another three internal ones. Two of the large external pockets are padded and can be extended so they can hold camera bodies or lenses up to 24cm long.

A fleece jacket is included that can be attached to the inside of the main jacket or worn separately, while the Extreme Photographers Vest is best described as a slightly smaller sleeveless version of the jacket. All the upper body items can be worn together if needed.

Finally, the trousers: these are also waterproof and use hard-wearing material across the knees and seat of the trousers, and have deep pockets for storing accessories.

As the whole exterior of the suit is made of 100% polyester microsuede and treated with Teflon, it should keep you warm, dry and protected from biting winds. The suit may not be to everyone's taste, but if you are serious about your outdoor photography it may prove an excellent investment.

Richard Siblev

For more information visit www.ultimatenaturegear.co.uk

A great suit for the serious outdoor photographer

Kizoa Online Slideshow Free

IZOA is an online photo slideshow website. It allows up to 1GB of images to be uploaded, and then be formed into an online slideshow.

To create the slideshow, simply drop your uploaded images in to a 'filmstrip' at the bottom of the page. In between each frame in the filmstrip is a space that allows transition effects, such as fades and zooms, to be placed. A range of effects and animations can also be added to your slideshow, but most of these are not really designed with the enthusiast photographer in mind.

Once your slideshow is finished, you can email a link to friends and family so they can view it on their computers. Alternatively, you can access the HTML code to embed the slideshow in a website or blog.

Beneath the kitsch exterior of Kizoa is a very simple, but fully functional, online slideshow-creation program. As most of the effects seem to be aimed at children, keeping the effects used to a minimum produces the best results.

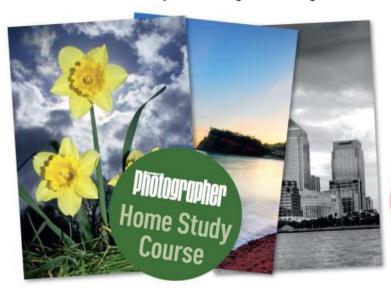
A monthly premium service, which costs \$3.99, gives access to a wider rage of effects and transitions, and



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Panasonic Lumix DMC-FZ38

Richard Sibley finds out if the combination of an 18x optical zoom and 12.1-million-pixel sensor make the

Panasonic Lumix DMC-FZ38 a suitable DSLR substitute

ITH a 12.1-million-pixel sensor, 27-486mm (35mm equivalent) 18x optical zoom lens and the ability to save images as raw files, the Panasonic Lumix DMC-FZ38 has, potentially, a lot to offer the enthusiast photographer.

Like most Panasonic compact cameras, the FZ38 has an extraordinary number of scene modes, including modes for photographing babies, starry skies and fireworks.

For those people who like to take portrait photos at family gatherings, the face-detection mode will be a useful feature, as will face recognition. Using a saved image on the camera, this function recognises individual faces and prioritises them over others when taking an image.

The other major feature of the FZ38 is its ability to shoot HD video footage, which can be saved using the high-quality AVCHD Lite codec.

Build and handling

The Panasonic Lumix DMC-FZ38 is well built, like a very small and sturdy DSLR. Its button layout and menu should prove simple to use for both compact camera owners and those more familiar with DSLRs.

Unlike an SLR camera, the FZ38 does not have a reflex mechanism. so while it does have a viewfinder it is electronic rather than optical.



At 201,600 equivalent pixels, the EVF is of a reasonably high resolution. However, I would suggest the EVF is only really useful for framing rather than manually focusing on a subject.

The one time when the EVF is necessary is when the lens is zoomed to its maximum 486mm focal length. Holding the camera at arm's length and using the rear LCD screen is not as stable as putting your eye to the viewfinder, and camera shake can become an issue.

Performance

The main selling point of the FZ38 is its 18x optical zoom. It takes around two seconds to go from 1x to 18x, which may sound a long time, but is quite impressive given the focallength range.

Like most compact cameras and Panasonic's G-series cameras, focusing is achieved via contrastdetection AF. While not as fast as the phase-detection systems found on SLRs, it is quite responsive.

One particularly good AF function is the AF tracking, which allows you to select a subject and keep focus locked on regardless of whether you or the subject move. Although sometimes confused by similar shades and colours, AF tracking generally works well and helps when photographing moving subjects.

Metering is well accommodated

Although the Panasonic capable of resolving a lot Images saved as raw files noise, and I would advise JPEG files

with spot, centreweighted and multi-area metering modes. I found that the intelligent multiple metering mode performed well in most situations, but I was grateful for the centre and spot metering modes for more precise subject metering.

The image-stabilisation system works extremely well. However, when the lens is set to the maximum focal length it is still necessary to increase the ISO sensitivity so that a fast shutter speed can be used to counter camera shake

Image quality

As there is only a small image sensor in the FZ38, image quality is on par with that of a compact camera. The FZ38 is capable of resolving a lot of detail, and as much as some 12-million-pixel DSLRs. However, at ISO 200 the noise starts to become noticeable. In fact, I would suggest that most photographers won't want to use the camera above ISO 400.

Purple fringing isn't visible in JPEG files, but a quick look at the raw files shows that it is a problem. The raw files also show high levels of noise, which is particularly bad at ISO 1600.

There is little point shooting raw files, as the in-camera corrections performed on the JPEG files are very good, and reduce both noise and chromatic aberrations. If you save images as raw files you will spend considerable time editing each one.

Verdict

In the right conditions and at lower ISO settings the image quality of the Lumix DMC-FZ38 is comparable to a DSLR camera, but above ISO 400 it cannot compete. However, with a huge 18x zoom lens and a range of

manual controls, it's an attractive alternative for those not quite ready to make the jump to a DSLR. AP



At a glance

- 12 million pixels
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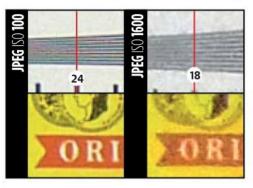




Taking around 2secs to power up and take an image, the FZ38 is great for quick snapshots

Panasonic UK Ltd, Panasonic House, Willoughby Road, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 8FP. Tel: 0844 844 3852. Website: www.panasonic.co.uk

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Sensor	12.1 million effective pixels
Output size	4000x3000 pixels
Lens	27-486mm (equivalent) f/2.8-4.4
ISO	ISO 100-1600 (plus 3200 and 6400 at reduced resolution)
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Exposure metering	Intelligent multiple, centreweighted, spot
White balance	Auto, six presets, plus custom
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Lumix DMC-FZ38 is of detail at ISO 80, noise and its reduction have a detrimental effect on the image detail as the ISO sensitivity increases. show the extent of the only saving images as

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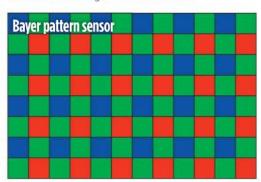
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Ex-rated answer

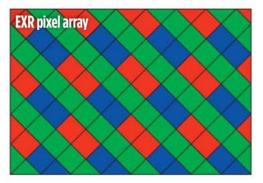
Walter Foreshore asks I was interested to read Barney Britton's review of the Fujifilm FinePix EXR200 (AP 15 August), Could he supply any more information about the technical specifics of how its sensor works? It sounds like interesting technology.

Barney Britton replies Indeed it is, Walter. There was no room in my test for a more detailed explanation, but I hope the accompanying diagrams will help. As you can see, the EXR sensor (below right) has a very different design to a conventional Bayer type (below left). In its full-resolution mode the EXR output is 12 million pixels, which requires the camera to perform some quite complex demosaicing calculations in order to create a true colour final image. The reason that this



is complicated can readily be seen from the diagram the green-filtered photosites are arranged contiguously, in diagonal lines across the array.

Where things get interesting is when the EXR sensor is switched to its dynamic range and signal-to-noise priority modes. At this point, the sensor actually becomes a Bayer-pattern array, though not of the conventional sort. The effective resolution in these modes is six million pixels, and the reason for this is that each photosite is paired with its nearest neighbour to produce a single pixel's worth of signal. In the dynamic range priority mode this pair of photosites operates at different sensitivities, which allows the pair to capture a greater range of highlight and shadow detail than would be possible with a single photosite. In the signal-to-noise priority mode, the signals from neighbouring photosites are simply combined to produce a single greater signal, which leads to less noise in the final image.



What's in a name?

Christopher Kenny asks I have an Orwo orthochromatic b&w film, which I think has to be rated at ISO 25. It came in an unboxed black plastic container and has no information about film speed rating or development times.

I've read that it is only sensitive to the blue end of the spectrum, so do I need to use green or blue filters over the lens? If I use an orange,

yellow or red filter, how will it affect the film?

Has it got to be loaded/unloaded in complete darkness, like infrared film? Finally, what are the development, stop and fix times?

Geoffrey Crawley replies If your film is indeed labelled Orwo, it is likely to be past its expiry date. It might be advisable to expose it at a lower ISO setting, such as ISO 12. An orthochromatic film is sensitive to blue/ green only - not to red - so it can be processed under a red safelight, though it has to be a good one at a reasonable distance. No filters should be used on the camera lens, as your film is an unknown quantity. The film can be loaded and unloaded in normal lighting like any other film. Any normal developer for black & white - or greyscale - film can be used. Stop and fix are the same as for any other film. A typical development time would be 10-12 minutes.

Orthochromatic film was in widespread use until the 1950s. The great Victorian masterpieces were taken on it or the more restricted

Tony Judd asks I read Angela Nicholson's feature on Lens Choice for Bird Photography (AP 1 August) with interest. I have

a Sigma 600mm f/8 lens I have used in the past on my old Nikon F2A film camera. I now own and use a Fujifilm FinePix S5 Pro. Can I use the Sigma lens in manual mode on my FinePix S5 Pro?

Richard Sibley replies As you probably already know, the Fujifilm FinePix S5 Pro is based on the Nikon D200 DSLR. As such, it uses the Nikon F mount and like the D200 it has an Al aperture ring connector, which allows it to be used with most compatible F-mount lenses, including the Sigma 600mm f/8. Just remember that the aperture is fixed at f/8 and without any electronic connections you will have to use your camera in aperture or manual exposure modes, as well as focus your lens manually.



One of the most common printing complaints concerns fine lines showing across prints. These lines are caused by ink drying in the print heads, causing the head to clog up. This prevents the ink leaving the cartridge and causes lines to appear. At its most extreme, all the heads of a particular colour can be

Your questions answered





Visiting the Eden Project

charliesenior asks I'm planning to visit the Eden Project in Cornwall next month, so does anyone have any tips for photographing inside the biomes?

Fen replies There isn't really any way to avoid condensation. The only solution is to sit down for a few minutes inside the warm dome and wait

Hotblack replies I agree with Fen with regard to condensation, and as for lenses, well, anything goes. Ultra-wideangle lenses will enable you to get the sweep of greenery and the biomes curving overhead. Longer focal lengths will compress perspective. As always, your choice of lens depends on what you want to achieve

Malcolm Stewart replies I haven't been to the Eden Project, but have visited the Welsh biome, and Birmingham and Oxford Botanical Gardens. I've found that getting a good white balance in the glasshouses is very important (I suspect that the glass they use acts as a filter). The solution, in my case, was to set the custom white balance using an Expodisc.

ZX9 replies I entered the Mediterranean biome first at the Eden Project to give my camera time to warm up - the humidity was not a problem. The Tropical biome was a different matter, because at first the camera looked like it had been taken into a shower room and it was about half an hour before it. could be used. Also, if it is a dull day, it can be deceptively dark in the Tropical biome and I had to use more flash than I would have liked.

blue-only sensitive emulsions. It tends to emphasise shapes and reveal the bare bones of the subject more than modern panchromatic - all-colour sensitive - materials. It is the antithesis of colour film and favoured by some landscape photographers. Anyone wishing to experiment with ortho film can buy it from Retro Photographic. Visit www.retrophotographic.com or call 0845 226 2647.

Adapter search

Robin Lenman asks I have two Leica R lenses, a 35mm and a 90mm, and would now rather use them on a Four Thirds (or possibly Micro Four Thirds) digital camera than on my old Leica R4s. I believe adapters are available, but I can find no trace of them. Where can I obtain one?

Richard Sibley replies Novoflex produces adapters to use Leica R lenses on both Four Thirds and Micro Four Thirds-mount cameras. The adapters cost £105 and are available from Speed Graphic, Visit www. speedgraphic.co.uk or call 08453 305 530 for details.

blocked, creating a print that is missing an entire colour.

Clogged heads most commonly occur when a printer is left unused for a long period. Most inkjet printers perform a cleaning routine every time they are turned on or off, which helps clear the print heads. The problem is that many people do not switch their printers off, but leave them permanently on standby. So while the printer is not being used, the ink remains in the ink head, drying up and potentially causing a blockage.

For this reason it is important to make sure you turn a printer off if it is not

going to be used for a long period. You should also turn it on and print a test pattern, or similar, occasionally just to help keep the print heads clear and running smoothly.

Some third-party inks may also contain chemicals that are more prone to causing blockages or other damage to the print heads than a manufacturer's proprietary inks. For this reason, make sure you buy inks from a reputable source. For more information on inkjet printing, look out for AP's Printing Supplement, which is free with AP 19 September. **Richard Sibley**

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- Get the most out of high ISO settingsNoise reduction software round-up

Charles Twist explains how to find the ideal subject and create strong compositions



APOY results

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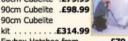
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Editorial comment

Which is the best camera on the market at any one moment is not simply a matter of fact. Of course, we can measure certain aspects of a camera's performance, as we can with lenses, and produce graphs, diagrams and score tables, but whether any particular piece of photographic equipment works well for any particular person is as much a matter of taste as it is of science. We all know people who love cameras we wouldn't even contemplate using.

When we test a camera at AP, we suspend our own preferences and consider how the readership as a whole will feel about that product. And even though we firmly believe in our own ability to dispense sound unbiased advice, it is always good to have the opinions of others to help shape a wider overall view.

In the pages that follow, you will see the concentration of views put forward by 15 other photographic magazines from across Europe. These are magazines with technical people we respect, and whose opinions we believe are worth listening to. Thus, we can confidently say the products that have collected awards from EISA this year thoroughly deserve them.

photographic choices in the coming months.

Damien Demolder Editor



Other 2009-2010 EISA awards

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In-car electronics

EUROPEAN IN-CAR HEAD UNIT JVC KD-AVX77: EUROPEAN IN-CAR NAVI-MEDIA SYSTEM Kenwood DNX9240BT: EUROPEAN IN-CAR HIGH-END COMPONENT Pioneer DEX-P99RS; EUROPEAN IN-CAR INTEGRATION Audison bit one; EUROPEAN IN-CAR AMPLIFIER Kenwood KAC-X4D; EUROPEAN IN-CAR SPEAKER SYSTEM DLS Scandinavia Series EUROPEAN IN-CAR SUBWOOFER Impact XT 15-11 EUROPEAN NAVIGATION DEVICE Becker Traffic Assist Z205

Video

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Mobile devices

EUROPEAN MUSIC PHONE Sony Ericsson W995; EUROPEAN NETBOOK ASUS Eee PC 1008HA Seashell; EUROPEAN BUSINESS PHONE Nokia E75; EUROPEAN PERSONAL MEDIA PLAYER Sony Walkman NWZ-X1050/1060; EUROPEAN CAMERA PHONE Samsung 18910HD; EUROPEAN SMARTPHONE Apple iPhone 3GS.

EUROPEAN GREEN MOBILE PHONE LG KM900 (Arena); EUROPEAN GREEN TV Samsung UE40B7000.

What is EISA?

The European Imaging and Sound Association is a collective of photographic, audio and video magazines in which members pool their skills and knowledge to award the best products in a wide range of categories each year. The awards are intended as a guide for specialist consumers. Only one magazine from each country may belong to any panel. 'Amateur Photographer', a founding member of the 27-year-old association, represents the UK for the photographic section of the awards.





Learn more about ESA at: www.eisa-awards.eu



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Best Product 2009-2010 CAMERA

Olympus Pen E-P1

European Camera 2009-2010

Olympus Pen E-P1 The Olympus Pen E-P1 is an elegant

camera with an appealing retro design. The camera utilises the new mirror- and prism-less Micro Four Thirds system, which allows the E-P1 to be very compact and lightweight. Besides the compact Micro Four Thirds lenses, users can fit existing Four Thirds, OM and Leica M-mount lenses to the body via an adapter. As the sensor is larger than that found in compact cameras better image quality and lower noise levels can be achieved. The camera doesn't have a viewfinder, but the LCD provides a clear view even in bright conditions.



SLR CAMERA

Canon EOS 500D

European SLR Camera 2009-2010







Great Deals on Canon Compacts, Digital SLRs and HD Camcorders

Canon

LENS EF-S 18-55mm 1:3555

500D

EOS





European Advanced Camera 2009-2010

Canon EOS 5D Mark II

The Canon EOS 5D Mark II is a worthy successor of the EOS 5D. The principle features remain the same: a full-frame sensor in a relatively compact body, but Canon has added extra professional features such as sealing against the ingress of dust and moisture, and functions like Live View, sensor cleaning and a 1080p HD-movie mode. Despite the increased resolution of 21 million pixels, Canon has been able to reduce noise levels to below those of the 5D, which is a great achievement.



European Professional Camera 2009-2010

Nikon D3x

With its ultra-high 24.4-million-pixel resolution and full-frame imaging sensor, the Nikon D3x is a dream for the professional photographer who mixes studio assignments with fast moving dynamic subjects outdoors. The D3x is capable of an image quality that previously could only be achieved with medium-format cameras fitted with digital backs, but it has much faster autofocus, continuous shooting rates and it can be used at sensitivities of up to ISO 6400 with astonishingly good results. With an enormous range of features the D3x is a top-class modern pro-camera that offers total control over the image, from the moment of composition in the large viewfinder to the output of a ready-to-use digital file.









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European Multimedia Camera 2009-2010

Panasonic Lumix DMC-GH1

The Panasonic Lumix DMC-GH1 combines the advantages of a compact camera with those of a DSLR: it is lightweight, has a small body, a high-resolution electronic viewfinder and Live View. In addition, the DMC-GH1 operates quickly, it produces excellent image quality and the lenses are interchangeable. The camera also has a very versatile vari-angle display screen and allows video recording in full HD. Image quality in both still and moving images is stunning. The GH1 is the first system-camera that provides continuous autofocusing in a movie mode



European Advanced Compact Camera 2009-2010

Samsung WB1000

The Samsung WB1000 is an advanced compact camera that features an elegant titanium body and a pair of analogue dials on the top plate that display battery-life and memory capacity information. The Schneider-Kreuznach 5x optical zoom, which has a 24mm widest focal length, has very well controlled distortion, while the 12.2-million-pixel CCD and SLR-like exposure modes help users to shoot creative pictures. Still and MPEG4 HD moving images can be reviewed on the camera's 3in high-quality AMOLED 460,000dot screen. These features, together with the built-in optical and software-based stabilisation, ensure that high quality images are easy to achieve







European Compact Camera 2009-2010

Sony Cyber-shot DSC-WX1

The Sony Cyber-shot DSC-WX1 is a very compact camera that is equipped with a high-quality f/2.4-5.9 'G-lens' with a useful zoom range of 24-120mm. It features an Exmor R CMOS sensor that yields excellent image quality while maintaining low noise levels. At the highest resolution of 10 million pixels, the camera can make a series of 10 images per second. Thanks to the extraordinary Sweep Panorama function, you only have to move the camera across a scene to make excellent panoramics that will be stitched together in-camera. Sony's new Twilight mode combines multiple exposures to produce hand-held low-light images with very little noise.



Great Deals on Nikon Compacts, Digital SLRs and Accessories





European Travel Compact Camera 2009-2010

Casio Exilim EX-H10

The Casio Exilim EX-H10 is a flat camera that is equipped with an excellent 10x zoom lens that includes a 24mm wide angle. The camera features many creative functions and an HD-ready quality movie mode. The larger than average 3in rear display is perfectly usable even in direct bright sunlight. With a fully-loaded battery the camera can shoot 1,000 photos - approximately three times as many as other cameras.



European Adventure Compact Camera 2009-2010

Olympus µTough-8000

The Olympus µTough-8000 is the ideal companion for photographers with an active outdoor life. Designed to be used both underwater and for normal photography, the µTough-8000 is waterproof down to 10 metres and even has a built-in pressure gauge that indicates its actual depth. The camera is shock-proof against drops onto hard surfaces from a height of up to two metres, and those who enjoy winter sports will find they can use the camera in temperature of -10°C. Many functions can be controlled by tapping the camera's sides, making it easy to use even when wearing gloves.







European Lens 2009-2010

Sigma f/2.8 24–70mm IF EX DG HSM

Sigma's f/2.8 24-70mm IF EX DG HSM lens offers first-rate image quality in a lightweight and affordable body. Designed for use with full-frame and APS-C-sensor digital SLRs, as well as 35mm film cameras, this fixed-aperture zoom exhibits consistently high detail resolution at all focal lengths and performs well right across the image frame - essential in a full-frame lens. The Hypersonic Motor (HSM) boosts the camera's own autofocusing system, to ensure fast reactions and that subjects are focused and tracked quickly, while high-refractive index glasses in three elements allow a compact design and well-controlled chromatic aberrations, even at the corners of the frame. Covering an extremely useful range of focal lengths, the Sigma 24-70mm f/2.8 IF EX DG HSM is an excellent lens for the professional and high-end amateur alike.







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European Travel Lens 2009-2010

Tamron AF f/3.5-6.3 18-270mm Di II VC LD Macro

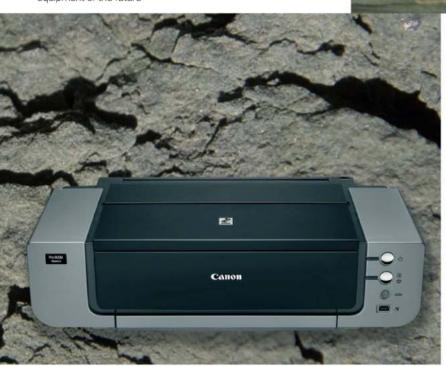
With this 15x-zoom APS-C-format lens, Tamron has not only produced a DSLR lens with the most extensive zoom range available, but also an impressive optical performance. Tamron's built-in optical image stabiliser, Vibration Compensation (VC), is able to reduce the impact of camera shake so the photographer can handhold the lens at shutter speeds of up to 4 stops beyond normal safe levels. This is especially useful in low-light conditions. With its compact design, light weight, high optical performance and extremely wide focal range, the Tamron AF 18–270mm VC lens is a perfect travel companion.



European Zoom Lens 2009-2010

Sony 70–400mm f/4–5.6 G SSMThis new lens from Sony benefits from a solid construction and

This new lens from Sony benefits from a solid construction and ED glass elements to achieve the respected G-type quality level expected of professional lenses. It is one of the lightest lenses in its category, and it features a fast and almost silent SSM motor that allows users to switch instantly between auto and manual focus. Image quality is very good even at full aperture, and the lens displays very low distortion for a zoom of such a wide range. This entirely Sony-designed lens is one of the most positive signs of the commitment this manufacturer has towards the pro-level photo equipment of the future







European Photo Printer 2009-2010

Canon Pixma Pro9000 Mark II

As the quality of digital cameras accelerates in detail and colour reproduction, so the demands on desktop printers increases. Photographers need improved accuracy, speed and convenience, and Canon's Pixma Pro9000 Mark II A3+ inkjet printer delivers all three. With 48-bit processing, this updated model is able to reproduce a much wider range of colours, and allows photographers to print raw files directly from Canon's DPP raw conversion software package. A minimum ink droplet size of 2pl ensures even the finest detail is rendered accurately, while providing the potential to produce much smoother tonal and colour transitions



Great Deals on Pentax Compacts, Digital SLRs and Accessories





European Photo Accessory 2009-2010

Novoflex QuadroPod

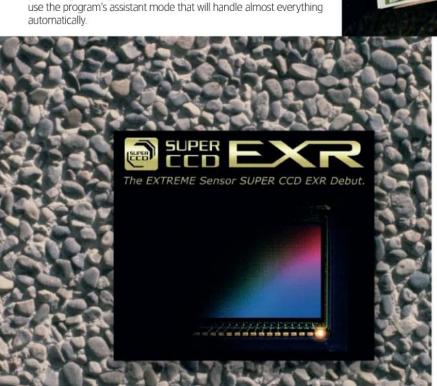
With the revolutionary QuadroPod, Novoflex has made a step in to a completely new dimension. The ingenious addition of a fourth leg to the classic tripod delivers enhanced stability as well as a new level of flexibility that enables photographers to shoot with ease from a wide range of positions. The modular concept of the QuadroPod has three different basic elements, including tripod legs in various lengths and materials, heads and centre-columns for particular uses and an extensive range of accessories to meet the needs of a wide range of photographers.



European Photobook 2009-2010

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European Photo Innovation 2009-2010

Fujifilm Super CCD EXR

Fujifilm's new Super CCD EXR sensor has been designed to adjust its behaviour according to the conditions in which it is being used so it can deliver the user the best quality for any situation. The sensor has three different shooting modes that can be either selected manually by the user or left to the camera to automatically choose which suits the occasion. In high resolution (HR) mode the sensor uses all its 12 million pixels to render the finest details of the scene, while a high-sensitivity (HS) mode it uses pixel-coupling technology to produce images with low noise levels in very low-light conditions. A further high dynamic range (DR) mode combines two exposures to deal with high-contrast situations.







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270_{mm}



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Maestro victors

We reveal the top three photo contest winners





















1st Gergely Kömöz, Hungary

Nikon D80, 18-70mm and 10-20mm, ISO 100

Gergely Kömöz from Hungary has won the 2009–2010 European Imaging and Sound Association's Maestro competition with his images depicting the theme Water. The event was organised by the 16 photo-panel members of EISA.

Gergely, who describes himself as a self-taught amateur photographer, took these photographs from the banks of the River Danube and Lake Balaton in Hungary. He chose black & white as a medium because he says it 'adds harmony' to a photograph. He wins EISA's European Professional Camera of the Year 2009–2010. the Nikon D3x.



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2nd Aurica Voss, Germany

Canon EOS 350D, 18-200mm, ISO 100

Second place goes to Aurica Voss, a 30-year-old photographer from Berlin. Aurica took these images in New York in the USA, and has used water as the subject, as a surrounding element, and with its opposite element, fire. Aurica wins EISA's European Camera of the Year 2009–2010, the Olympus Pen E-P1.



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SIGMA



OUR WORLD

Tom Servais: Born in Miami in 1953, Servais moved to California at the age of 20 to 'find himself' and pursue surfing. After taking several photography classes, he began his career as a photographer with Surfer magazine. Fueled by the joy of turning his passion into a career, he travels the world in pursuit of an endless summer.

Photo data: SIGMA 18-250mm F3.5-6.3 DC OS HSM, 1/1,000-second exposure at f/6.3.

TOM SERVAIS SHOOTS THE WORLD WITH A SIGMA LENS.

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*Vignetting (a darkening of the corners of the image) will occur if the lens is used with digital SLR cameras with image sensors larger than APS-C size or 35mm SLRs, and APS SLRs

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SIGMA 18-250# F3.5-6.3 DC OS HSM DESTA















Canon EOS 5D, 28mm, 50mm and 85mm, ISO 100-400

In third place is 31-year-old Thomas Lekfeldt from Denmark. Thomas graduated from the Danish School of Journalism in 2007 and works as a freelance photojournalist. He took these images in Dhaka in Bangladesh, and they depict the pollution affecting the Buriganga River from numerous tanneries in the area. Thomas wins EISA's European Advanced Camera 2009-2010, the Canon EOS 5D Mark II.

To see photographs from the UK's entrant, Belfast's Mel Boyle, turn to pages 32-33 of this issue.













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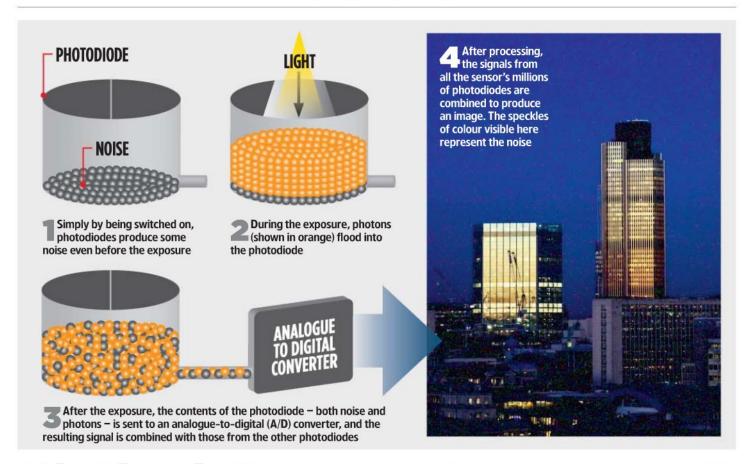
stereo sound allows artistic film-making with SLR picture quality. You can even use the art filters in movie mode. Add to that 12.3 Megapixels, 3fps, image stabilisation with 4 EV steps, and AF Live View for real-time effect and you start to get just a hint of the creative power available in the palm of your hand. The new Olympus PEN – yet another Olympus revolution.



Noise is a hot topic for digital photographers, but what is it? **Barney Britton** explains the origins of noise, and examines the different types you may encounter in your images

OISE is a subject of constant discussion, and it is one of the facets of a camera's performance that generates the most debate in camera tests. 'Noisy' cameras are criticised, and 'clean files' are treasured. Noise is not just a digital issue, but it is a uniquely electronic phenomenon, and there is no direct equivalent to noise in traditional film imaging. It might help, however, to think of noise as a version of the 'grain' that appears in medium and high-sensitivity film emulsions, since

the effect is often visually similar. You can't escape noise. Simply by being switched on, a digital camera's sensor generates noise, and even if you take a picture with the lens cap on and the exposure is completely blank, it will still contain some noise.



nat is noise?

In basic terms, noise is the component of an electrical signal that does not originate from the input, but from the device that generates and/or carries the signal. The 'background activity' that causes noise is technically known as dark current, and dark current is

present in any photosensitive device, even when it is not exposed to light.

If this all sounds obscure, imagine a microphone set up in a silent room. When its gain control is turned up, the microphone will appear to pick up a background 'hiss', but this

sound is actually generated not by a background noise, but by the microphone and the amplifier. A similar effect can be heard in music playback – if you turn up the volume during a gap between songs on a CD, you will hear a background hiss that is not actually a component of the recorded sound.

In digital cameras, noise is most

noticeable in images taken at high ISO sensitivities and occasionally at long exposures. Many digital cameras, and most DSLRs, offer two noise-reduction settings - often called 'long exposure' and 'high ISO' noise reduction - to combat this. These options are covered in more detail in my article on in-camera noise reduction on pages 71-73 of this issue.



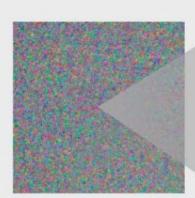


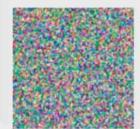
Image noise

High ISO noise

This is the sort of noise that digital photographers are familiar with. When you turn up the ISO sensitivity of your camera, speckles of colour emerge in the shadow and midtone areas, and detail is often masked by a gritty patterning that, at its most extreme, can be seen in vertical or horizontal bands across an image. The coloured speckles are known as chroma noise, and the monochromatic grittiness is luminance noise. In basic terms, luminance noise is created when neighbouring pixels in an image are the same colour, but have varying brightness values. Chroma noise, which is generally more offensive, is when neighbouring pixels show different colours



Luminance noise



Chroma noise

when they should be the same. Different camera manufacturers take different approaches to these two types of noise, and whereas some cameras deliver detail at the expense of grittiness, others smooth the noise at the expense of fine detail. You can see how a typical DSLR reduces high ISO noise in AP explains... in-camera noise reduction on pages 71-73.

The root cause of both chroma and luminance noise is the same, and both are created when the signals from photosites on a camera's sensor are amplified. To understand why this amplification is necessary, turn to page 71 of this issue.

High ISO noise is visible in two main patterns: random noise, where the noise is scattered in a random pattern over the frame; and banding, where noise takes the appearance of lines running horizontally or vertically across the image. Random noise is shown in the illustrations on the left, and banding in the image above. This particular picture was taken at ISO 12,800, although banding can appear in midtone areas in very low light even at lower ISO settings. Banding is caused by the structure of the camera's sensor, and the way in which the signals from its photosites are read and collated by the camera's processor. Banding is created by variations in the output strength of entire lines of photosites, not just individual receptors.

Random noise is the more common type, and this is the sort of noise that in-camera and post-capture noise-reduction systems are best set up to deal with.



Long-exposure noise is known as 'fixed pattern', because it is in the same position in every frame. It is often more objectionable than random pattern noise because it is more intense, but as it appears in

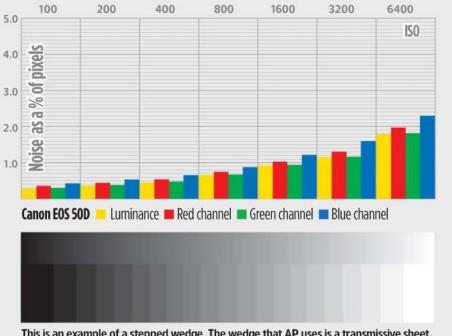
fixed patterns it is easier to deal with. As its name suggests, long– exposure noise emerges in images taken at long shutter speeds, typically of several seconds at least. It is caused by individual photosites delivering more charge than those around them. I have mentioned that simply by being switched on, a photosite generates some charge. Over time, this charge can build up and leak out, which can lead to individual pixels glowing brightly

when they shouldn't. Heat is a factor in fixed pattern noise, too, although modern CMOS sensors are less prone to such heat-induced noise than CCDs. Long-exposure noise reduction is explained on pages 71–73. AP

How does AP measure noise?

Regular readers will be familiar with the noise levels graph that we publish in selected camera tests, but you may have wondered how we arrive at the figures shown in the graph. To produce the data that we plot, a stepped 'wedge' is photographed by the camera on test at every available ISO sensitivity setting, and these images are examined in a scientific analysis program. The wedge (see example on the lower right) is a grainless target, lit by uniform lighting from behind. Theoretically, in the final image the pixels should be the same tone in each segment. If some pixels have a different tone from the rest, they represent noise. To measure the amount of noise, the analysis program counts the number of pixels that are not of the expected tone and produces a figure as a percentage of the total, shown on the y axis of this graph.

Turn to pages 71-73 for **AP explains... in-camera noise reduction**, where you'll find an explanation of how digital cameras are designed to minimise noise, and how you can use your camera's settings to reduce noise in your images



This is an example of a stepped wedge. The wedge that AP uses is a transmissive sheet, with several segments that go from being totally opaque to completely transparent

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Pretty Bella Half Photo

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Lenspen Pro Kit

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Sigma DP2

Sigma's DP2 has been launched into a world with Micro Four Thirds cameras that blur the line between a compact model and a DSLR. Is there still room for a true compact camera with a fast, high-quality lens?

Angela Nicholson Technical Writer



DP2's sensor captures information about the three primary colours, Sigma maintains that its 4.7-million-effective-pixel count can justifiably be considered three times greater. Hence the DP2 is referred to as a 14-million-pixel camera. Sigma claims that not having any coloured filters or a demosaicing stage means that the signal generated by the DP2 is cleaner and that image colours are more natural yet vivid.

Although the earlier DP1 is capable of producing excellent images, its success has been tempered by its slow AF and image-processing systems, plus the blotchy coloured noise visible in images taken at the highest sensitivity setting (ISO 800). Some users may also have been put off by the simplicity of the DP1 with its lack of subject-based processing modes. Sigma claims to have addressed some of these issues with the DP2, its second compact

digital camera featuring an APS-C-sized sensor. However, this camera has been launched into a world with Micro Four Thirds cameras that also attempt to straddle the line between a DSLR and a compact camera. As well as having lots of functionality, Micro Four Thirds cameras can accept interchangeable lenses, while the DP2 has a fixed lens with a focal length equivalent to a 41mm optic in 35mm terms. I wonder if there is still a place for a compact digital camera with a pared down specification.

Build and handling

Just like the DP1, the DP2 has a stylish rectangular body with no bulbous curves and plenty of retro charm. It's not flashy and is quite discrete, but it looks serious and says, 'I am a photographer' to anyone who catches you taking a shot.

One price of the DP2's understated design is that it provides

Sigma DP2 Compact camera

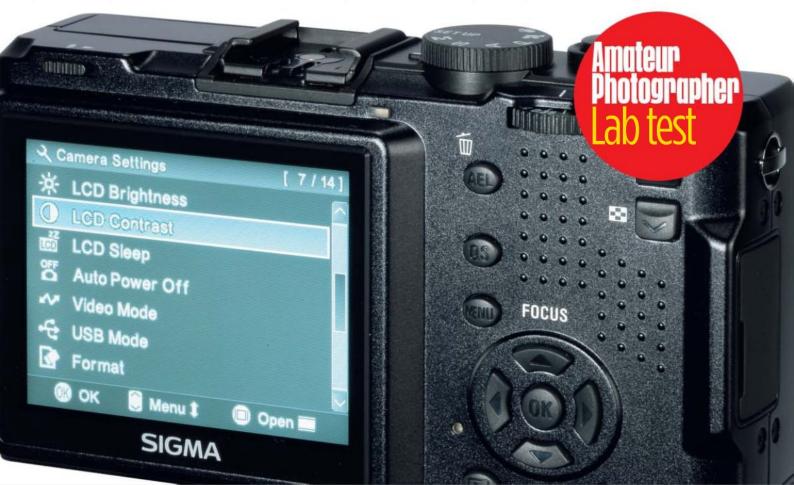


At a glance

- Foveon X3 sensor with 4.7 (or 14) million effective pixels
- 24.2mm f/2.8 lens (equivalent to 41mm in 35mm format)
- ISO 50-3200
- Street price around £530

little purchase for the fingers and, as I find with the DP1, it can slip around in your grasp when held one-handed. Another issue is that the etched symbols and lettering on the buttons on the back of the camera are difficult to see. Even in decent light, when I first picked up the camera I found myself holding it at an angle to check which button to use. Of course, once you become familiar with the layout this is less of a problem.

A button marked QS (Quick Set) provides speedy access to eight functions



Data file





Sigma Imaging (UK) Ltd, 13 Little Mundells, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL7 1EW. Tel: 01707 329 999. Website: www.sigmaimaging.co.uk

RRP	£599.99
Sensor	20.7x13.8mm Foveon X3 Direct Image Sensor (CMOS) with 4.68 million effective pixels in 3 layers (14.06 million)
Output size	2652x1768 pixels
File format	Raw, JPEG
Compression	Three-stage JPEG
Colour space	sRGB or Adobe RGB
Shutter speeds	15-1/2000 (varies by shooting mode)
Max flash sync	1/2000sec
Lens	Sigma 24.2mm f/2.8 (equivalent to 41mm)
ISO	ISO 50-3200 raw files, ISO 50-800 JPEG
Exposure modes	Auto, program, aperture priority, shutter priority, manual
Metering system	Evaluative, centreweighted, average and spot
Exposure comp	±3EV in 1/3EV steps
White balance	Auto, six presets, plus custom
Drive mode	Single and continuous (3fps), self-timer
LCD	2.5in LCD with approx 230,000 dots
Focusing modes	Manual, single AF
PC socket	No
Built-in flash	Yes, GN 6m ld 100m
Memory card	SecureDigital/MMC and SDHC
Power	Rechargeable Li-Ion battery
Connectivity	Hi-Speed USB
Weight	260g (without battery or card)
Dimensions	113.5x59.5x56.1mm

Focal points

Raw and JPEG

Sigma maintains that providing a simultaneous raw and JPEG recording mode is not an issue of technical ability, but licensing. As yet, no Sigma digital camera can record raw and JPEG files at the same time

Setup

There is a setup option on the main control dial that provides access to all the usual configuration controls. The memory card (SD/SDHC) format option is located in this menu

Picture Settings

The contrast, sharpness and saturation of images can be varied to ±5 steps via the Picture Settings option in the main menu. The information is recorded for raw files, but no adjustment is applied and the settings can be adjusted using the Sigma Photo Pro software. As usual, the adjustment is applied to JPEG images before they are saved so it cannot be undone

My Settings

Up to three groups of a dozen camera settings (including the image size and image quality plus the flash, metering and drive modes) can be stored via the Save My Settings option in the main menu. These can then be recalled via the Load My Settings option

that are controlled via the navigation buttons. The adjustments are made by simply toggling through the options, so, for example, if the camera is set to ISO 100, it takes seven button presses to reach ISO 50 (going though 200, 400, 800, 1600, 3200 and auto) when shooting raw files. The maximum setting for JPEG images is ISO 800, so this reduces the number of presses to five. However, specific settings can be selected via the main menu.

While the DP2 certainly feels well crafted and nicely put together, it is occasionally let down by its firmware (V1.02). There were two or three occasions during this test when the camera refused to behave as it should, then would not turn off, forcing me to remove the battery. Once the battery was back in place, the camera performed as it should.

White balance and colour

Sigma has provided a selection of colour modes to tailor images to suit different scenes (Standard, Vivid, Neutral, Landscape and Portrait, plus Sepia and Monochrome with JPEG files). In ideal shooting conditions the DP2 produces pleasant, naturally coloured JPEG images with fairly low saturation when the automatic white balance and Standard colour modes are selected. However, the results can be inconsistent, and in overcast or shady conditions the colours become cooler and less saturated.

Blue skies seem to present a particular problem for the DP2 and they are often made quite cyan or sometimes red. Though the Sigma Photo Pro software provided with the DP2 is easy to use, colour adjustments are a little imprecise and are made by dragging a point around a colour wheel. There is no option to adjust specific colours, so I adjusted

my images until they were close to what I wanted, saved them as TIFF files and then worked on them using Adobe Photoshop. It is also possible to open the DP2's raw files directly using the latest version of Adobe Camera Raw. This is helpful as Photo Pro can take a few seconds to render images after each adjustment.

Viewfinder, LCD, Live View and video

There is no viewfinder built in to the DP2, so images must be composed on the 2.5in, 230,000–dot LCD screen. This required a little guesswork on some occasions in the bright sunlight of Spain, where I conducted part of this test. However, although I may not have been able to see the correct colours or all the detail of the images, I was usually able to see the composition reasonably well.

When I reviewed the images later in the day I noticed that they look quite cool, but after downloading them I was able to see that this is actually a property of the camera's screen. Most of my images are more saturated and much warmer than they appear in the LCD screen.

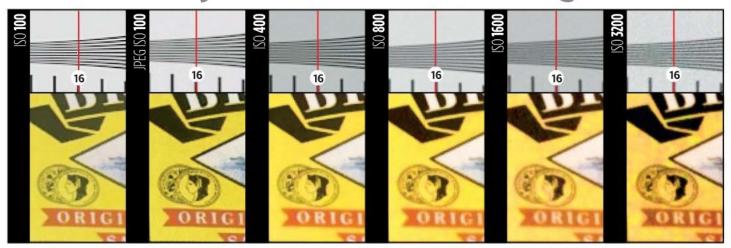
While I had the optional Sigma VF-21 viewfinder for the DP2 throughout this test I rarely used it, even when it was ready for action in the hotshoe. It is an optical finder with no electrical connections, and while it provides a clear view it doesn't show any shooting data, plus it's not possible to see if the subject is in focus or not. It made me feel a bit divorced from the camera. Those who don't mind this will appreciate its bright image.

Videos are recorded at a resolution of 320x240 pixels (QVGA) at 30fps, and while movement is smooth the detail resolution doesn't compare with the results from HD videoenabled cameras.

The detail of the stones is very sharp, but the sky doesn't look natural straight from the camera and needed adjusting in Adobe Photoshop



Resolution, noise and sensitivity



The first shots I took with the DP2 were taken fairly late in the evening and I had to use the highest sensitivity setting (ISO 3200). When I saw the results on the back of the camera my heart sank. I'd never seen worse banding. Fortunately, although it is visible until the image is correctly rendered. when the shots are opened in Adobe Camera Raw or Sigma's own Photo Pro

software the banding disappears. However, large splodges of bright chroma noise are visible in high-sensitivity raw images. Some give the impression of having lots of sharp detail and they make nice monochrome or low-saturation images.

In comparison, JPEG files contain much less detail and shots taken at the ISO 800 maximum for this file format have a coarse, grainy texture and fine banding, with some edges appearing to bleed into their surroundings. As JPEG and raw files cannot be recorded simultaneously and because the raw files can be converted easily, I recommend keeping the DP2 in raw mode.

Thanks to the camera's excellent lens and the larger than average sensor for a compact camera, the DP2's detail resolution is very good for a model with a pixel count of 4.7 million. Details appear very clear and sharp, up to the sensor's resolution limit. However, the DP2 cannot guite match the resolution of a 14-millionpixel camera such as the Canon PowerShot G10, and images from the DP2 are more comparable with those from a six to eight-million-pixel camera.

Metering

As with most digital cameras, it is advisable to keep an eve on the histogram when taking pictures of especially bright or dark subjects. On the whole, though, I found that the DP2's 256-seament evaluative metering system put in a good performance during this test. It isn't calibrated to protect highlights at all costs, so it does not underexpose the main subject when there are small bright areas in the background. Exposure compensation is provided in 1/3EV steps to ±3EV and is applied quickly using the left and right navigation buttons.

Autofocus

The DP2 has nine individually selectable AF points, arranged in a grid around the centre of the imaging frame. In reasonable light the AF system usually finds its target in around a second. It's not especially fast, it makes an unpleasant noise while it does it and the screen usually freezes for a fraction of a second, but it is generally accurate. The slowness and screen freezing mean that it's not suitable for use with moving subjects as they have often gone before they are sharp. In low light the camera may need several attempts at getting the subject sharp

66 In reasonable light the AF system usually finds its target in around a second 55

and it may be necessary to move the camera to position the active AF point over an area of higher contrast.

Although the DP2 has a good manual-focus system, the LCD screen doesn't show enough detail in its normal viewing mode to allow even remotely accurate focusing. Fortunately, the on-screen image can be enlarged and this makes it much easier to focus manually. However, this isn't especially quick, so on some occasions it is better to use the distance scale on the manual focus dial to prefocus and then rely on the depth of field provided by a small aperture.

The competition

Canon PowerShot G10

Sigma DP1

DATE TESTED 22/11/2008

LTHOUGH Sigma has managed to make the DP2 more responsive than the DP1 and image processing is faster, the wider angle lens of the DP1 (equivalent to a 28mm f/4) makes it attractive. The extra depth of field with the shorter focal length also helps to mitigate the AF and manual focus issues. Neither camera, however, is a real all-rounder like the Canon PowerShot G10. The DP2, for example is not the camera to take to a party or social gathering, whereas the G10 can be used for a wide range of photography. The quirks of the DP2 and DP1 make them a better choice for taking sightseeing shots on holiday when you have time to indulge your hobby, and want to concentrate on the basics of photography, such as composition and exposure, rather than experimenting with different focal lengths and camera settings. These are the kinds of cameras you use when you fancy shooting with something a bit different.

Our verdict

HEN I tested the Sigma DP1, some devoted Sigma fans took issue with the fact that I used the JPEG setting, let alone criticised the results. My view is that if a camera has such a commonly used mode, we should test it. However, the world now has mass-market 'compact-crossover' cameras that offer plenty of modern functionality and it is even less likely that the DP2 will appeal to a novice photographer. As most of the images produced by the DP2 need some form of adjustment and because the available raw file processing software is easy to use, there seems little point in using the JPEG mode. The raw files are sharp and give the impression of having more detail than the resolution charts suggest.

The Sigma DP2 gives its user a rollercoaster ride. It looks and feels great, and it is capable of some really nice results, but it is inconsistent, with the AF system and noise at its higher sensitivity settings still its Achilles heel. Although some images are suitable for making A3 prints, many are better kept to A4 size.



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Amateur Photographer Explains...

Barney Britton explains how the sensors in digital cameras are designed to minimise the amount of noise that is generated, and how cameras reduce noise in the images they create

O understand how digital cameras are set up to reduce noise, it is important to remind ourselves how digital sensors work. On the surface of a digital camera's sensor are millions of photosites, each of which is sensitive to light but filtered to be sensitive exclusively either to red, green or blue light. In conventional Bayer-pattern sensors, which are the vast majority, there are twice

as many green-sensitive photosites as there are red or blue.

During the exposure, photosites collect light in the form of photons, like buckets collecting raindrops. After the exposure, the number of photons is measured and an analogue–to–digital (A/D) converter turns this reading into an electrical charge proportional to the amount of light that the photosite has been exposed to. The signals from the millions of photosites on

a sensor are then combined to create a photograph.

If there is plenty of light, the sensor can operate at its 'base' ISO sensitivity and a good signal is generated, leading to clean images with little noise. This situation is known as a high signal-to-noise ratio (SNR). However, in long exposures or in poor light at high ISO sensitivity settings, the proportion of photons to noise

collected in each photodiode drops, and noise makes up a greater proportion of the total signal. In this article we'll look at how digital cameras are designed to be as efficient as possible at reducing noise, both in the design of their sensors and via in-camera processing. I will also show you the effects of high ISO noise reduction, and how and when to use these in-camera settings.



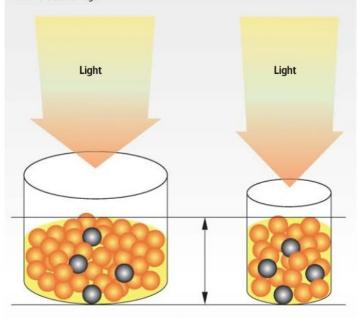
Sensor optimisation

E usually think of noise reduction as being something that happens after the exposure, either in the camera's processor or in an imagemanipulation program. However, some of the most important stages in noise minimisation occur within the circuitry of the sensor, before

the image has even been recorded to a memory card. One extremely important element in reducing the amount of noise in high ISO images is ensuring that the signal from the sensor's millions of photosites is as pure as possible. This can be achieved in a number of different ways (see below).

1 Bigger is better

The most basic method of increasing the signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) of a photosite is to make the photosite as large as possible. Large photosites, like the one below left, gather more light than small photosites, and therefore their signals require less amplification, which leads to a higher SNR. In low light, where fewer photons are being collected by the photodiodes, the proportion of photons to noise is lower still, placing the smaller photodiode, with its limited light-gathering capacity, at a distinct disadvantage



Noise **Photons** A smaller sensor (shown on the right) collects less light, and consequently,

2 Measure the noise, not just the signal

Some variation between the amount of noise generated by neighbouring photosites is to be expected, even when dealing with subjects of a uniform tone. By comparing the amounts of noise that different photodiodes generate just by being 'on', the camera can go some way to cancelling out the differences. Random noise can be reduced using a similar method, which involves 'emptying' each photodiode immediately prior to exposure and measuring the noise that is 'dumped' in this way separately to the charge generated by the photons during the exposure

noise comprises a higher proportion of the total signal that it generates

3 Bury the circuitry

Most current DSLR cameras feature CMOS sensors. One of the advantages of CMOS technology is that the signals from each photodiode can be processed 'on site' at the photodiode itself. However, a considerable amount of circuitry needs to be placed around the photodiode. This reduces the amount of space on the surface of the sensor that is available to the light-sensitive photodiode (known as the 'fill' factor) and it can also generate heat, which increases the amount of noise that each photodiode generates. The solution is to bury the circuitry inside the silicon wafer on which the sensor is constructed. This allows the photodiode to cover a larger surface area, and insulates it against the heat that the circuitry generates

High ISO noise reduction



F you're a JPEG shooter, your camera's built-in noisereduction settings can make a significant difference to the quality of your pictures.

Different manufacturers take different approaches to noise reduction, but these images show how a typical mid-range DSLR reduces high ISO noise in-camera. These images were shot on an APS-C-format DSLR at ISO 3200, and notice how the raw image, which has not been processed to reduce noise, is sharp, but noisy.

Even the JPEG taken with NR turned off is smoother than the raw file, but as noise reduction is applied the images becomes progressively smoother, but detail begins to get lost. At the 'High' NR setting, a lot of fine detail that was visible in the original shot is completely absent, having been 'smoothed over'. Because different cameras have different 'styles' of noise reduction, you should experiment with your own camera at its different ISO and noise-reduction settings to establish the setup that suits you best. In next week's issue (AP 29 August) I'll show you how to take control over postcapture noise reduction yourself.

How it works

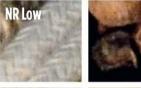
In-camera noise reduction for random high ISO noise is generally based on either linear, or non-linear filtration. but usually a combination of the two.

Linear filtration

Linear filtration works by taking the noisy original, creating a blurry copy, then combining the two. The blurring action brings each individual pixel closer in value to those around it, which minimises the appearance of noise. Combining it with the non-blurred













original preserves the appearance of sharp edges. The downside to this method of noise reduction is that it is very destructive to fine detail.

Non-linear filtration

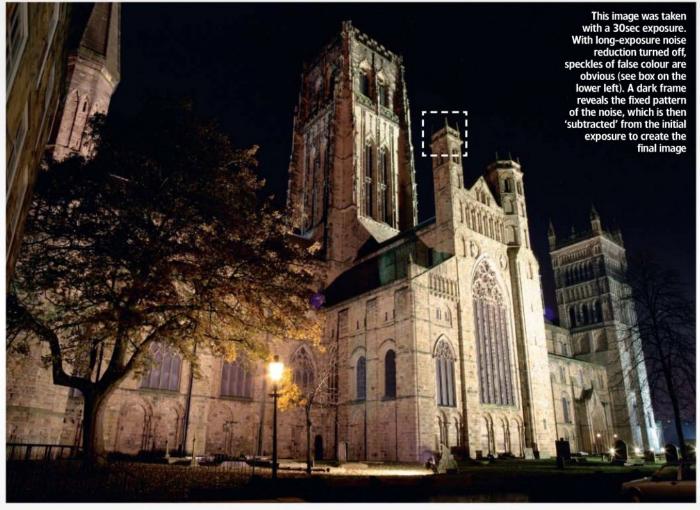
Non-linear filtration is less destructive to fine detail. The camera considers each pixel in the image, then compares it to those that surround it. These neighbouring values are collated, and if one of the pixels is of an unexpected value compared to the others, it is replaced by an average tone, thus 'camouflaging' the noise.

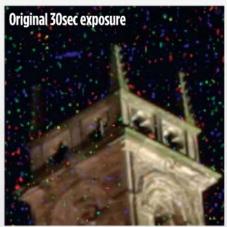
Long-exposure noise reduction

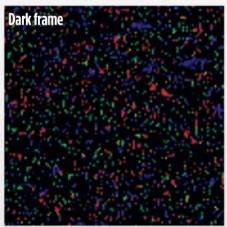
N AP explains... noise on pages 63–65 of this issue, we saw how long-exposure noise can affect images taken at long shutter speeds. However, because long-exposure noise is of the fixed pattern type, it is relatively easy to remove. In most cameras, when long-exposure noise reduction is turned on, the function 'kicks in' after exposures reach a certain time, which is generally a few seconds. The way the function

works is that after the initial exposure, the camera makes a second exposure of exactly the same duration, but with the shutter closed. This is called a 'dark frame'. As the camera's sensor is not exposed to light during the second exposure, it knows that any data this image contains must be noise. Because the noise has a fixed pattern, the camera can 'map' it and delete it from the initial exposure. The benefit

of long-exposure noise reduction can be seen from the example below. However, the downside is that your camera will 'lock up' during the period of the second dark-frame exposure, effectively doubling the length of time it takes to capture an image. For this reason, unless you see a lot of noise in your long-exposure images, you may find that the inconvenience outweighs the benefit.









Next week, Barney Britton looks at how to get the most out of high ISO images, and shows you advanced techniques for reducing noise as well as how to add noise for creative impact

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Nikon F Nikon F F F F Nikon F + Eye-Level Finder Chrome #6452xxx	Exc+	F £350	8mm f8 Nippon Kogaku with v/finder #883xx 24mm f2 AIS #233xxx	Exc++	£850 £350	Pre-owned Nikon Aut			Pre-owned L		
Nikon F + Eye-Level Finder Chrome Sold	Exc+	£350		Mint-	£450	Nikon D3 (complete; boxed) 1600 Actuations Nikon D1X body only	Mint User		Leica M7 0.72 Silver (boxed) Passport ends April 2013 Leica M7 0.72 Black	Sold Exc+	£159
Nikon F + Eye-Level Finder Chrome	Exc	£230	Tamron 24mm (2.5 (Al Fit)	Exc+	£80	Nikon D300 (complete; boxed) 1550 Actuations	Mint-		Leica M7 0.85 Black	Exc++	
Nippon Kogaku Waist Level Finder	Exc++	£80	24mm f2.8 Nikkor-N Al Converted (nippon Kogaku)	Exc++	£190	Nikon D300 Body Only Under 1700 Actuations	Mint-	£790		Mint	£399
Nikon F2 Nikon F2 F2 F2 F2 F2	F2	F2	24mm f2.8 AIS #812xxx Sold	Mint	£240	Nikon D80 + Charger	As new	£290		Exc++	183
Nikon F2 with DE-1 Chrome #7640xxx Sold	Exc++	£320	24mm f2.8 AIS #824xxx Sold	Mint-	£220	Nikon F5 #3115xxx	Exc+	£320		Exc+	£83
likon F2 Photomic #7118xxx Sold	Exc+	£170	Zeiss 25mm (2.8 Distagon ZF + hood Sold	Nr. mint	£590	Nikon F5 #3190xxx Sold	Mint	£390		User	£69
likon F2AS Black #7782xxx	Exc	£270	28mm /3.5 AI #1856xxx	Exc	£80	Nikon F5 #3225xxx Sold	Mint-	£370	Leica M6 Black #2414xxx	Exc++	83
Nikon F2AS Black #7937 Brassy	User	£220	28mm f4 Perspective Control	Mint-	£550	Nikon F4S #2319xxx Sold	Exc+++	£270	Leica M6 Black #2279xxx (boxed) Sold	Ехс++	83
Nikkormat Nikkormat Nikkormat	Nikkor	rmat	35mm f1.4 AIS #606xxx (boxed) very late lens;			Nikon F100 #2077xxx	Nr. mint	£230	Leica M4-P Chrome 1/2500 (70yr Anninversary)	Exc+++	+ £9
likkormat FT Black New mirror foam	Exc++	£120	purchased Brand New from us	As new	£590	Nikon F100 #2077xxx	Mint-	£200	Leica M4-P #1551xxx	User	£4
likkormat FTN Chrome Sold as seen	User	£70		User	£130	Nikon F100 #2157xxx Sold	Nr. mint	£230	Leica M4 #1176ixx Solid	Exc	£5
likkormat FT2 Chrome #5099xxx	Exc+++	£130	35mm f2.8 Perspective Control #870xxx Sold	Exc+	£320	Nikon F90 #2006xxx Now £70	Exc+	£120	Leica M4 #1184xxx	Exc+++	183 +
M FM2 FA F3 FE2 FM2n F3 FE	FM3A	FM2	,			Nikon F90X Pro #2116xxx Now £160	Ехс+++	£230	Leica M4 #1234xxx Solid	Mint-	£9
likon FM3A Black (boxed)	Exc+++	£390		Mint-	£450	Nikon F90X #2248xxx Now £110	Exc++	£170	Leica M4 #1207xxx Black Paint Sold	Exc++	£27
likon FM Chrome #3446xxx Sold	Exc+	£150		As new	£250	Nikon F90X #2402xxx Now £120	Exc+++	£190	Leica M4-2 #1469xxx	Exc+++	
likon FM2 Black #7182xxx	Exc+	£190	50mm f1.4 AIS (boxed) Sold	As new	£220	Nikon F90X #2491xxx Now £110	Exc++	£170	Leica M3 #758xxx D/W	Exc+++	
likon FM2 Chrome #7202xxx likon FM2n Chrome #8074xxx Sold	Exc+	£190	105mm f1.8 AIS #192xxx 105mm f2.5 AIS #979xxx Sold	Mint- Exc+++	£490	10mm f2.8G AF-S DX Fisheye Sold	Mint	£390		Exc	£5
likon FM2n Chrome #8276xxx Sola	Exc++	£190 £230		Mint-	£190	20mm f2.8 AF-D	Mint	£330		Exc++	£6
likon FM2n Chrome #8429xxx	Exc	£190	105mm f2.5 AIS (boxed) Sold	As new	£220 £250	24mm f2.8 AF-D (boxed)	Mint-		Leica MD	Exc++	£3
likon FM2n Chrome #8448xxx	Mint-	£290		Exc++	£290	Sigma 50mm f1.4 EX HSM + hood	Mint-		Leica MD-2	User	£2
likon FM2n Chrome #8662xxx Sold	Exc+++	£250	135mm f2.8 AIS #921xxx	Exc++	£130	Sigma 50mm f2.8 EX Macro (boxed)	Mint	£130		Exc++	£3(
likon FM2n Black #7513xxx	Exc+	£220	135mm f3.5 Nikkor-Q Al Converted #968xxx	Exc++	£70	60 mm f2.8 AF-D Macro	Mint	£250		Mint-	£25
ikon FM2n Black #7571xxx	User	£190	180mm f2.8 AIS ED #393xxx Sold	Exc+	£230	85mm f2.8D Macro PC	Mint	£850		Exc+	£6
kon FM2n Black #7709xxx	As new	£350	180mm t2.8 AIS ED #445xxx	Exc++	£270	Sigma 105mm f2.8 EX Macro + hood	Mint	£230		Exc+++	
kon FM2n Black #8591xxx (boxed)	Exc+++	£290	200mm f4 Nikkor-Q.C Al Converted #628xxx	Exc+	£80	105mm f2.8 AF-D Macro 200mm f2G AF-S VR + hood & Soft Case Sold	Mint- Mint	£350	21mm f2.8 Elmani-M + hood & V/finder #3362xxx	Mint-	£12
on FM2n Black #8702xxx (boxed)	Mint-	£320	200mm f4 AIS Macro #192xxx	Exc++	£450			£2490		Exc	
kon FE Chrome #3083xxx	Exc+	£150	200mm f4 AIS Macro #205xxx	Exc+	£390	300mm f2.8 AF-I ED + hood Sold 400mm f2.8 AF-S ED + hood	Exc++	£1490 £3750	21mm f4 Super-Angulon #1676xxx Rare 24mm f2.8 Elmant-M ASPH 6 bit	Exc+++ Mint	£16
kon FE Chrome #3420xxx	Exc+++	£170	300mm f2 AIS EDwith fligh case	Exc++	£7900	500mm f4 AF-S II + hood & Case white finish	Sold	£4390		Exc+++	
kon FE Chrome #3454xxx	User	£110	300mm f2.8 AIS ED	Exc+	£690	Sigma 10-20mm f4-5.6 DC HSM + hood Sold	Mint	£300		Exc+	£8
kon FE Chrome #3824xxx	User	£110	300mm f4.5 AIS #510xxx Sold	Exc+	£190	16-85mm f3.5-5.6G AF-S DX VR + hood (boxed)		£350		Mint	£6
on FE Chrome #3862xxx	Exc+	£150	500mm f8 Reflec-Nikkor C	EXc+	£190	17-55mm f2.8G AF-S DX + hood	Mint	£690		Mint	£11
on FE Chrome #4076xxx	Exc+	£150	600mm f4 AIS ED + hood #177xxx Sold	Exc+	£1290	18-35mm f3.5-4.5 AF-D	Mint	£270	35cm f2.8 Summaron with specs (M3 fit) #2049xxx	Exc++	£
on FE Chrome #4447xxx	Mint-	£200	28-50mm f3.5 AIS #198xxx (boxed)	Mint	£250	18-70mm f3.5-4.5G AF-S DX	Mint-	£150		Exc+++	
kon FE Black #3135xxx Sold	User	£110	28-85mm f3.5-4.5 AIS #242xxx Sold	Exc++	£220	18-135mm f3.5-5.6G AF-S DX + hood	Mint	£170		Exc+++	
on FE Black #3385xxx New mirror foam	Ugly	£90	35-70mm f3.5 AI #798xxx	Exc+++	£270	18-200mm f3.5-5.6G AF-S VR	Mint-	£390		Exc+	£10
on FE Black #3576xxx	Exc++	£180	35-70mm f3.5 AIS #826xxx	Exc+	£220	20-35mm f2.8 AF-D + hood Sold	Mint-	£590	50mm f2 Summicron-M + hood #3449xxx Sold	Mint	£6
kon FE Black #3905xxx	Exc++	£180	35-70mm f3.5 AIS #967xxx	Exc++	£250	24-85mm f2.8-4 AF-D + hood	Mint-	£320	50mm (2.8 Elmar-M + hood #3727xxx	Mint-	£4
kon FE Black #4157xxx	Exc+	£150		Mint-	£190	24-120mm f3.5-5.6 AF-D	Mint-	£220	75mm f1.4 Summilux-M 3260xx Built in hood Sold	Nr. mint	t £15
kon FE2 Chrome #2080xxx	Exc+	£210		Exc++	£230	24-120mm f3.5-5.6G AF-S VR + hood	Mint-	£290	90mm f2.8 Elmant Chrome #2129xxx	Mint-	£3
kon FE2 Black #2538xxx New mirror foam	Ugly	£150		Mint-	£270	28-70mm f2,8 AF-S ED	Exc+	£750	90mm f2.8 Elmant-M Silver #3806xxx	Mint-	£7
kon FA Black #5172xxx	User	£130		Exc+++	£80	28-70mm f2.8 AF-S ED + hood	Mint-	£850	9cm f4 Eimar (Collapsible) Chrome #1492xxx	User	£1
kon F3 Titanium Champaign #8215xxx	User	£390		Exc+	£220	28-105mm f3.5-4.5 AF-D + hood (boxed)	Mint-	£170	135mm f4 Tele-Elmar	Exc+	£2
kon F3 Titanium Champaign #8216xxx	Exc	£450	43-86mm f3.5 AI #798xxx	Exc+++	083	35-135mm f3.5-4.5 AF	Exc++	£120	135mm f4.5 Heidor #1583xxx	Mint-	£2
kon F3 #1591xxx Beautiful condition Sold	Mint-	£250	Hasselbl	ad	,	70-210mm f4-5.6 AF (boxed)	As new	£130	Leica R6 Chrome	Mint-	£4
kon F3 HP #1375xxx Sold	Exc+	£190	Hasselblad XPAN with 45mm & hood Sold	Exc+	£950	70-300mm f4-5.6 AF-D ED + hood	Mint-		Leica SL2 Black	Exc+	£3
Pre-owned Ca	no	n	30mm f5.6 with v/finder hood & center filter	Exc+	£1450	80-200mm f2.8 AF-D ED + hood 1 Touch	Exc++	£450	28mm (2.8 Elmant-R 3 CAM #3229xxx	Mint-	£3
S-1Ds+Charger & Instructions 9400 Actuations only	Nr. mint	£990	90mm f4 with lens keeper	Exc+	£370	80-400mm f4.5-5.6 AF-S ED + hood Sold	Mint-	£820		Exc++	£5
OS-5D + Charger	Mint-	£890	903SWC with Vifinder + A12	Exc+	£2250	Metz 40MZ-3 i (boxed; instructions)	Mint-	£130	35mm f2.8 Elmant-R ROM #3333xxx	Exc++	£2
OS-50D + Charger	Mint	£590	SWC/M with V/finder	Exc+	£1350	Nikon SB-28	Mint	£110			
S-1N RS S-1V	Exc++	£350 £390	500CM + 80mm f2.8 CT* + A12 RV1259xxx	Exc+	£690	Other Medium / Large	Fon	mat	ultra sim filter in presentation box	Mint-	£6
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24mm f2.8 (baxed)	Mint	£270		Exc++	£470	Fuji GW670 III (65mm) Counter-44	Mint-	£690		Mint	£3
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300mm f4L USM IS (boxed) Sold	Nr. mint	£850	150mm f4 Sonnar CFT* #6915xxx Sold	Exc++	£420	Mamiya 50mm f4.5L + hood & V/finder	Mint-	£750	28-85mm f3.3-4 Vario-Sonnar T* MM	Mint-	£
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Nissin Di866 flashgun

The **Nissin Di866** is pitched as the world's most powerful hotshoe flashgun. **Richard Sibley** discovers that it has even more to offer

LTHOUGH a guide number (GN) of 60m at ISO 100 is particularly impressive for a flashgun, there are many more interesting features on the Nissin Di866. In fact, the Nikon version I tested has a lot in common with the Nikon Speedlight SB-900, as well as some interesting features of its own.

Build and handling

Structurally, flashguns haven't changed much over the years and the Di866 is no different. It has a basic tilt-and-shift head, a wideangle diffuser and a built-in deflector. For those photographers who use bounce flash a lot, there is also a fixed secondary flash on the front of the unit. This is weaker and has a GN of just 12m at ISO 100, but it is designed to fill in and soften shadows when the powerful main flash is being used to bounce light from a ceiling.

While intelligent TTL systems have made it easier for novice photographers to obtain good results using flashguns, recent years have seen the addition of many more features, such as multi-flash and wireless modes, which have the potential to bewilder an unfamiliar photographer.

The first thing I noticed about the Nissin Di866 is that it uses a bright, full-colour LCD screen to display information. Underneath this screen is a cursor control button that is similar to those found on digital cameras, and other than this there is only a power switch and a pilot button to indicate when the flash capacitor is charged. It is a surprisingly simple array of controls, and I wondered how exactly I would control so many features.

I needn't have worried, though, as using the full-colour LCD display allows the flashgun to be controlled via on-screen menus so it doesn't need a vast array of buttons controlling the different facets of the flashgun.

After turning on the flash, six icons representing different menus – Auto, TTL, Manual/Av, Multi, Wireless and Settings – greet the user. All you have to do is select the required setting and



use the cursor control to adjust it – just as you would on a digital camera's menu system.

If the flash's menu system needs to be updated by Nissin to solve a problem or to add a new feature, there is a USB socket on the side of the flash that allows its owner to perform a firmware update. A socket for attaching a flash lead or a Nikoncompatible power supply is hidden under a rubber cover on the side of the flash. For a flash with so many features, it is extremely simple to use.

Performance

Apart from its power, the next most important feature of the Di866 is its wireless flash capabilities. Not only can it act as a remote flash, but it can also act as the master controller. With it sitting on the hotshoe of a Nikon D300, I found it straightforward to set the flash to master mode to allow it to control a Nikon Speedlight SB-600. It

allows full wireless control of the SB-600, so I could select either manual control of the SB-600's power output or set it to TTL and use flash exposure compensation. Like the Nikon SB-900, the Di866 can be set to one of four channels, and each channel can control up to three other flashguns, allowing for quite complex lighting.

Removing the Di866 from the hotshoe of a Nikon D300 and setting it to remote allows it to be controlled wirelessly using the camera's built-in pop-up flash.

Using a fresh set of four AA alkaline batteries, the flash has a recycle time of around 5secs. Using NiMH batteries speeded up the recycle time to nearer the Nissin-quoted 3.5secs, but Nissin claims that a recycle time of just 0.5secs is possible using the Nissin Power Pack Pro 300.

The colour of the light generated by the flash was neutral and produced good results when using both the flash and automatic white balance settings of the Nikon D300.

Overall, I have to say that the Di866 is one of the easiest-to-use flashguns I have ever come across.

Verdict

I am very impressed with the Nissin Di866 flashgun – so much so, in fact, that it has been added to my 'things I must purchase' list. Below the simple exterior of the flashgun lies a wealth of features that are straightforward to use.

Retailing in the shops for almost £100 less than the Nikon Speedlight SB-900, the Nissin Di866 may prove to be a popular alternative for those who want a powerful wireless flash. AP

Price: **£369.85.** Available in Nikon and Canon fit. For more information and to purchase visit **www.kenro.co.uk**

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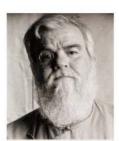






Roger Hicks

HAVING PHOTOGRAPHED MY LOCAL AREA TO DEATH, COULD MOVING REINVIGORATE MY PHOTOGRAPHY?



ROGER HICKS is a much-published author on photography. He has written more than three dozen books on the subject, many in partnership with his wife, Frances Schultz. Roger started photography as a teenager in the 1960s and worked professionally in a London advertising studio in the mid-1970s. He has been a freelance photographer/writer since 1981, contributing to many photography magazines, including 'Shutterbug' in America. Visit his website at www. rogerandfrances.com.

AMILIARITY, they say, breeds contempt. 'Contempt' is almost certainly too strong a word, but in my experience familiarity breeds visual indifference. In what follows, I apologise for a higher degree than usual of self-centredness, but equally, I'd suggest that many photographers would benefit from a similar degree of soul-searching.

I live in an exceptionally beautiful part of the world, and I try to follow William Morris's dictum that you should have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful. After seven years, though, I'm beginning to wonder if I'm not 'pictured out' with the things there are to shoot around here. It just seems harder and harder to find inspiration. The weeping willows over the river, the ancient stone buildings, the cycle of the seasons from frosty winters to baking summer; yes, it's all beautiful and I've already photographed it.

Now, I know there are people whose minds don't work in this way. They can go back to the same subject again and again, and shoot it a different way every time. For example, Weston could take endless pictures of peppers. Then again - and I know this smacks of heresy - I can't help feeling that once you've seen one, you've seen them all. Or to quote a young friend of mine from many years ago, speaking of David Hamilton, 'The first one is fantastic, and the second one is good, but after the tenth you start asking, what else can he do?' Of course, Weston could do (and did) a lot more, but the argument about repeatedly photographing the same subject still holds good. Some can do it. Some can't. I can't.

At this point, we run into one of the most poisonous shibboleths of photography: the idea that you 'ought' to be able to find pictures in your own back yard. To guote Granny Weatherwax: show me where it says 'ought'. There are some things you do because you have to: 'have to' in the sense that, for example, the Inland Revenue will get peevish if you don't, or your employers won't pay you if you don't work, except perhaps in the case of non-executive directorships. There are other things you either do or not, as the spirit takes you.

Photography is in this latter category: you can take it or leave it. Even if you say (and believe) that you 'have to' take pictures, what you mean is 'pictures that are satisfying to me'. Otherwise, you could sit in your chair and take pictures of a blank wall - though I suppose you might at least get an Arts Council grant for that. If you're not turned on, photographically speaking, by your own back yard, then you're not, and that's it. There's no 'ought' about it.

This is where things start to get iffy. If I move, will I in seven years be as 'pictured out' with a new location as I am here? If so, moving looks like a bad move (as it

GG After seven years, though, I'm beginning to wonder if I'm not 'pictured out' with the things there are to shoot around here 35

were). I'd have a job finding a house that was as roomy or as convenient as this one, quite apart from the hassle of actually moving. The people next door might be a lot noisier: right now, it's offices on

one side and a second home on the other that is only occupied for three or four months a year. I'd lose touch with most of the friends from round here, and have to make new ones. My property taxes and insurance would go up and, in seven years, I might be no better off than I am now.

On the plus side, though, the likeliest place I'd move to would be Arles, in the South of France. The one with the Rencontres de la Photographie every July. It's not the Rencontres that especially draws me, though. No, rather it is a combination of two things. The first is that Arles is a quintessentially small city, and has been for more than 2,000 years. There's just more to do, more to see, more to photograph in a city than there is in a village. Small cities have always been where I get my best pictures. The second thing is the Provençal light, the same light that drew Vincent van Gogh to Arles, where he is at least as much commercialised as the Rencontres.

But am I deceiving myself? Eventually, Vincent left Arles, and moved to Auvers, far to the north. I've been to Auvers. I can't see why anyone would live there. Or why Vincent left Arles. Or whether it will do me any good to move, or not. AP

Editorial

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